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CHANCERY 3344 MARCH 23, 1957 VOLUME 101 NUMBER 2647

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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

Edwin Phillips enjoys eating and the arts

THROUGHOUT his childhood Edwin Phillips, who is illustrating *Far, Far The Mountain Peak* (the second instalment begins on page 12), was made to admire a portrait above the mantelpiece. It depicted his father's wartime colonel, and for years Phillips and his younger brother had to listen to the great man's virtues being extolled. They came to dislike that colonel very much, but now, at last, he has proved useful. "As soon as I had read this new story by John Masters," says Phillips, "a picture of Peter Savage took shape in my mind: it was the portrait over the mantelpiece."

An excellent memory, not only for pictures but also for the written word, has helped Phillips to become an outstanding illustrator of dramatic and historical scenes. He is a tremendous reader and has a talent for absorbing the atmosphere of a period through its literature.

Phillips, who is thirty-seven, never had a formal art education. "But that doesn't mean that I didn't have to learn—and the hard way, too." As he travelled to his work as a film publicity artist he studied Thomson's *Anatomy* on the bus. In the evenings he went straight from the office to a life drawing class. And when he got home at ten o'clock hours of drawing still lay ahead.

Today a well-ordered routine in the studio at his Regency house in Kensington allows him time to indulge his enthusiasms for good food, good music, and his eight-weeks-old son, Erwin—"who is fairly good." With his wife Doreen accompanying him on the recorder, Phillips plays Sullivan opera tunes on his violin to soothe the baby to sleep. He admits that he can hardly wait to get a violin tucked under young Erwin's chin. "Although," Phillips says, "judging by the way the youngster rules the household now, I'm not certain which of us will be playing second fiddle."

WHILE visiting Spain some years ago, cartoonist Leslie Starke opened a book of useful phrases and his eye fell upon: "You have given me too much change." Says Starke wryly: "That shook my faith in books for travellers." Thus was sown the seed of "Leaves From Starke's Holiday Guide Book," the second series of which begins on page 30.

Starke has lived in a Victorian house on the edge of London's tranquil Primrose Hill since 1946, and has stirred from it to leave Britain four times—to visit Spain, Denmark, Sweden and, three years ago, Paris.

He has no studio; his desk is piled with books, and there is a small jar of paint brushes at his elbow. These give him all the inspiration he needs for his mental excursions to the five continents which he draws upon for cartoon subjects. His characters range from masked savages to cloistered monks.

"I suppose the fact is that I don't really need holidays," says Starke. "I enjoy my work so much that they are often wasted on me. It's a bit complacent to say that life is one long holiday—but for me it's true."

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Free Speech

- **Can we afford sports gossip?**
- **Whisky from the sea**
- **This flag flew for ninety years**

MORE concentrated work is done in my office between March and June than during any other time of the year. The tempo is no longer interrupted by heated arguments about a bat and ball game being played at the other end of the earth.

The office boy finds something better to do than put his head round the door every fifteen minutes with the latest score. And less of the firm's money is wasted by executives telephoning their wives four times a day for sports news bulletins.

Strikes cost Britain two million working days a year. But if three million office workers each waste five minutes a day talking sport we are losing nearly four million days every half year.

The country, in its present predicament, cannot afford it.—C. R. G., Southall, Middlesex.

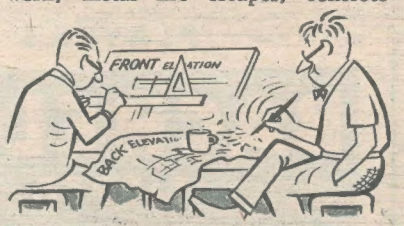
Bus Chatterboxes

I always find bus journeys dull if two men sit behind me. They either talk about cars, sport and newspapers or not at all. But two women can be relied upon to delight me with non-stop accounts, usually slanderous, of their neighbours and in-laws.—HELEN MACGREGOR, Norbury, London.

Back In Five Minutes?

The new row of shops and flats built near my home looks magnificent and a credit to the district—from the front.

But from the road at the back the view is of a straggling network of drainpipes, flat, uninteresting brickwork, metal fire escapes, concrete



steps and small, scruffy, fence-bounded yards.

I know that the backs of buildings aren't meant to be beautiful. But surely architects could make them more attractive.—O. P., N. London.

Tactless Tourists

I was cooking a roadside meal in Italy—my three-week walking tour having left me with deep sun-tan and a rather ragged beard—when three English people passed.

The woman wondered if I spoke English and the man said, in the lofty tones of one who knows: "I shouldn't think so. He looks the ignorant native type." But when the girl said: "I wonder what that evil mess is that he is cooking," I could no longer contain myself.

So I said, between loud bursts of laughter: "Stewed steak and onions."—P. S. SELVIDGE, Guildford, Surrey.

Emergency Charge

In the United States, according to films and novels, a person making an emergency call from a public telephone has to use a nickel.

Surely this is behind the times. Lack of small change at a critical moment could mean loss of life. Haven't any of the states anything to compare with our efficient "999" service?—R. K., Rochdale.

The United States has no "999" system, and ways of calling the police by telephone vary from city to city. In many public call boxes, a nickel is needed for a call, but sometimes this is returned afterwards. In some cities the police are summoned by the operator, and in others this is done direct.

Happy Hose Down

The men in our works fire brigade show little enthusiasm for ordinary drills. But give them one in which they can use the hose and they are

as keen as mustard. Men, it seems, are always boys at heart, loving to play with fire and water.—J. B., Caerleon, Newport, Monmouthshire.

"True," says a psychologist. "Most men enjoy making an organized noise, putting on a parade and even playing with toys. I make model boats myself."

Called To Account

An unqualified person is not allowed to practise as a solicitor or dentist, but anyone can set himself up as an accountant.

Surely the public has a right to be protected by restricting the description to those qualified to do the job.—C. D. ROBINSON, Walthamstow, London.

Shareholders are protected by the fact that auditors dealing with the accounts of public companies must belong to one of five professional bodies recognized by the Board of Trade, although individuals may apply for special recognition.

Whisky Trove

Besides the thousands of pounds' worth of Jamaican banknotes carried by the steamship Politician when she sank off Eriskay during the war ("Strange Tales Of The Sea," JOHN BULL, February 16) was a large quantity of whisky for the American market.

Most of this was salvaged by people of the neighbouring islands and the Lochaber district of Inverness-shire, and this operation inspired Sir Compton Mackenzie's novel, *Whisky Galore!* In this the ship was named the S.S. Cabinet Minister, and the islands, Great and Little Todday, were popularly supposed to represent North and South Uist.—R. MACKENZIE, Edgware, Middlesex.

Much of the cargo was recovered while the ship lay in the shallows. Attempts were later made to salvage her, but she broke in half when refloated and was written off as a total loss.

"I certainly used the whisky incident in 'Whisky Galore!'" says Sir Compton Mackenzie. "But Great and Little Todday are purely fictional."

Fuming Policemen

All the fuss about air pollution makes me wonder why the regulations about heavy motor vehicles using fuel oil have not been amended.

As a police officer on traffic control I find that some drivers of these trucks seem to take a fiendish delight in emitting clouds of dense smoke when passing, causing discomfort to the public as well as to me.

This could be avoided if the exhausts were built to discharge the smoke high in the air.—C. C., Herefordshire.

"This should not happen if the vehicle is properly maintained," says a manufacturer, "although smoke can sometimes be produced at will. There is no technical reason why exhausts should not be extended up the side of the cab."

Flag Over India

Another flag flew day and night as the Admiralty flag does today ("Free Speech," February 23). The Union Jack flew over the shell of the Residency at Lucknow in memory of the fact that it was never hauled down during the Indian Mutiny siege.—M. CROSS, Mandrake Road, London, S.W.17.

This flag flew for ninety years. It was hauled down quietly and without ceremony on August 14, 1947, the eve of Indian Independence Day.

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

IT seems so familiar, somehow: the crowded little office, the managing director speaking with rather less than his usual composure, that joke about pretty brides having no troubles to iron out. . . . And then, suddenly, gloriously, she realizes that this is not just a carbon copy of a time-honoured ritual: it's actually happening to *her*. But, says cover artist Batchelor, experience warns her that the next item on the agenda of this board meeting will be cries of "Speech! Speech!" Ah well . . . at least she won't have to take it down in shorthand this time.

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LETTERS OF CONSEQUENCE

SHIRLEY ABICAIR
charming star of stage and television

"I sang on a leopard-skin tom-tom"
says SHIRLEY ABICAIR

"WAY back in Sydney in 1951, when I was at university," explains Miss Abicair, "I used to take my zither to parties and sing for friends.

"A grand ball came up one day and someone suggested I should offer my services professionally for the cabaret. So I wrote off to the organizers, and they were kind enough to engage me. I had no prepared act and no props. On the great night I sat cross-legged in black cocktail pants on a leopard-skin tom-tom and just sang!"

That letter took Shirley Abicair eventually to England and to top-flight show-business.

Any letter you write may prove to be a letter of consequence, too, and to be sure that your letters create a good impression do as Shirley Abicair does and use Basildon Bond. "I use Basildon Bond," she says. "Then I know my letters will always look their best."

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Killers of the reefs

by ***OLAF RUHEN***

Sharks were just part of the luck in this game . . . as long as it was only a game

JOHNNY LEGRAND was singing a song of cows in the corn, of apples in the barn, of ducks and goslings and little red hens, but his boat, the Calypso Girl, was knifing into the bright and dancing waters of the Coral Sea.

From her forefoot the flying fish fled away into the pink and gold and purple glories of the west, for the sun was setting now behind the mountains of the New Guinea main.

With that gay and careless baritone booming all around them, Johnny's divers and crew-boys, fourteen tough and wiry men gathered from Goodenough and the Dobu Passage, sat on the foredeck spooning their evening rice from the pot with the thin ends of hatch-locking wedges, as good seamen do.

They looked up briefly as the Girl cleared the passage by Observation Rock and opened up the waters north of Ubuia. Ahead, the ragged New Guinea peaks were lifting crooked fingers into the sunset's colour. To starboard, Fergusson Island stood up against the sky; to port was the long length of Normanby, pointing south to Samarai; and Samarai was the end of the voyage and the end of a dream, for there wasn't enough shell in the hold to settle the fuel bills, and the ship would have to go to pay the crew and the creditors.

But Johnny sang because Samarai was tomorrow and, while he thought it well enough to meet trouble face to face, there was little point in being beforehand at the rendezvous.

The ugliest lugger in the world confronted them as they cleared the passage. She was

Johnny nearly walked past without noticing the girl. But she stopped and asked: "Looking for somebody?"

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENT

blunt in the bows, and short and squat and gaff-rigged. She was carrying all her canvas, but the patched old sails flapped and sighed in the light evening air. There wasn't a sign of a ripple at her bow, but the helmsman stood at the tiller as though he could hold her to her course. The deck was crowded with hands. They looked despondent, Johnny thought.

His boss-boy, Harmony, stood up to watch, his last portion of rice poised on the edge of the big wooden wedge in his fingers.

"Those fellows got trouble, Captain," he said dispassionately, and sat down again.

Johnny swung the wheel hard over and brought Calypso Girl up on the other's quarter. He read the name, Queen Emma, on her bows.

"You all right, Emma?" he called.

A tall native, his hair spun out like a canopy about his face, came up from down below. "All right, Captain," he called.

"What's wrong with your engine?"

"No oil, Captain. No lubricating."

"I'll send some oil aboard," Johnny decided.

Harmony raised his eyebrows. "Maybe they run her dry a little while, Captain," he said. "Maybe that engine got trouble too."

"Hell, yes," said Johnny. One could never be sure of what native crews without white skippers would do to their machinery.

The anchorage was half an hour away, and he came to a quick decision. "I'm putting a towline aboard you," he yelled to the wallowing Queen. "I'll take you to the anchorage and then have a look at her."

The tall native waved a hand. "Very good, Captain! Thank you . . . !"

The dark had fallen like a blanket when at last they dropped the tow and Johnny pulled a dinghy across the star-bright water to the lugger, carrying a can of oil. He developed a respect for the native skipper when he found that Queen Emma's service tank still held a quota—it hadn't been run dry. The engine was another matter. It was old and battered, and when he gave it an experimental run, a fury of exhaust gas poured from the valve seatings.

The tall skipper crouched beside him, pursing his lips. "Engine's very old, Captain. Very weak," he said. "He's got no compression much. Pretty soon he die finish, I think."

"Your boat?" queried Johnny shortly.

"No, Captain. He belongs to Mrs. Collings. Engine lost his punch a long time ago. Six months. More."

Johnny felt his gorge rising. "Some woman sent you out with an engine like that, and sails like the ones you were wearing? What have you been after—shell?"

"Trochus and green snail, Captain. But we've done no good. Three bags only. There will be no profit for any of us."

"Got far to go?"

"Palamasea, Captain. North-west. About eighty miles only. But it may take some time."

Johnny took out a cigarette, and the native's eyes followed him.

"You got tobacco?" Johnny asked.

"No tobacco, Captain."

Johnny's eyes travelled past him to where a drum, cut to carry a wood fire, was made fast to the stern. The fire was out, and it had been cold for some time.

"Got plenty food?" he asked.

"No food, Captain. We ran out of food three weeks ago. Sometimes we raid a garden, sometimes catch a fish. We're all right, Captain."

"What kind of a woman is this," asked Johnny, "to send you out without food, without tobacco, with those sails, and that engine?"

"A good woman, Captain. We stopped too long. We looked very hard for shell for her. We found none. But we're all right."

Johnny stepped into his dinghy. "Send your boat over," he said. "I'll give you tobacco and food, and I'll tow you to Palamasea. All right?"

"All right, Captain. Thank you." The tall native leaned over the dinghy. "My name is Willing," he said.

Harmony was unimpressed when he heard the story. "Something wrong, Captain," he commented. "Good reefs at Palamasea. Plenty trochus shell. Plenty green snail in the surf. These boys they walk about too much." Harmony knew all the seven seas, the peculiarities of their inhabitants, and the country that lay beneath them, or so it sometimes seemed.

"I'll get to the bottom of it," Johnny promised. "Get some sleep, Harmony. We'll get under way at midnight. . . ."

They raised Palamasea in the early afternoon. It was a low coral crescent and the horns enclosed a good anchorage with a short coral-block jetty. There was a fast-looking work boat in the bay, a converted cabin-cruiser.

On the jetty a man in frayed and dirty whites stood sucking at an empty pipe. He was thin and cadaverous, with a hooked nose and a bird's nest of sparse, straight hair showing in front of a straw hat pushed well back on his head.

Johnny jumped ashore and left the work of making fast to his crew.

"I'm looking for a Mrs. Collings," he told the thin man, who continued to watch the two newly arrived vessels, but condescended sufficiently to point vaguely over his shoulder with his thumb. Johnny stopped short and stared momentarily, and, as he turned away, the thin man took the pipe out of his mouth and spat. It seemed a deliberate gesture, but the fellow hadn't shifted his apparent attention from the activity on the boats.

Johnny turned and walked along the track. But the incident added to his indignation, and he was still raging half a mile farther along when he turned the corner and saw the girl.

She was as golden as the golden day and her walk was straight and graceful. In any other moment, Johnny's heart would have lifted, but it was chained with resentment against the thin man who had spat on the jetty and an unknown woman who sent her crews out in dangerous seas with rickety gear and insufficient stores.

He nearly walked past the girl without noticing her, but she stopped and spoke. She said: "Looking for somebody?"

"A Mrs. Collings," said Johnny, taken by surprise.

"Straight on," the girl said. "But is it something I could do? What did you want to see her for?"

"I want to tell her what I think of her," said Johnny curtly.

"No doubt you know her well enough to express an opinion," the girl said. "Just what kind of woman is she, do you think?"

"I think she's probably some rotten little trader who'll starve her men and risk their lives in a rotten little vessel for the sake of a quick profit," Johnny said. "Apart from that, I don't know anything about her." He looked again at the girl, carefully. "Just where do you come into this?"

"Mrs. Collings," said the girl, "happens to be my grandmother. I thought I might be able to take your business off her hands because she's not so young as she used to be. You'll be another of Mr. Morrow's little nuisances, I take it. She ought to be able to handle you very well." And she stormed off down the path.

JOHNNY watched her go, admiration and resentment warring in his mind. Then he continued his walk, but somehow he couldn't recapture the mood of righteous indignation that had possessed him. The path led through an avenue of coconut palms, their butts bolstered by green banks of shrubbery and the bright red splashes of hibiscus flowers. Johnny came all too soon upon the house with wide verandas that nestled in an inlet of the bay.

Nor could he recover his mood of righteous wrath when, to meet his approach, a tiny old lady came from an inner room. Her face was sweet and only slightly lined, and there was a strength of character in it which matched the features of the golden girl along the track.

"I'm Johnny Legrand," he said, "and you are Mrs. Collings."

"You're hot, Mr. Legrand," she said. "Come in and sit down. A lime drink or a cup of tea?"

"I won't stay," he said. "Mrs. Collings, I picked up the Queen Emma at Ubuia last night."

"I'm so grateful. I saw you bring her in. I'd been worried. She's nearly a month overdue."

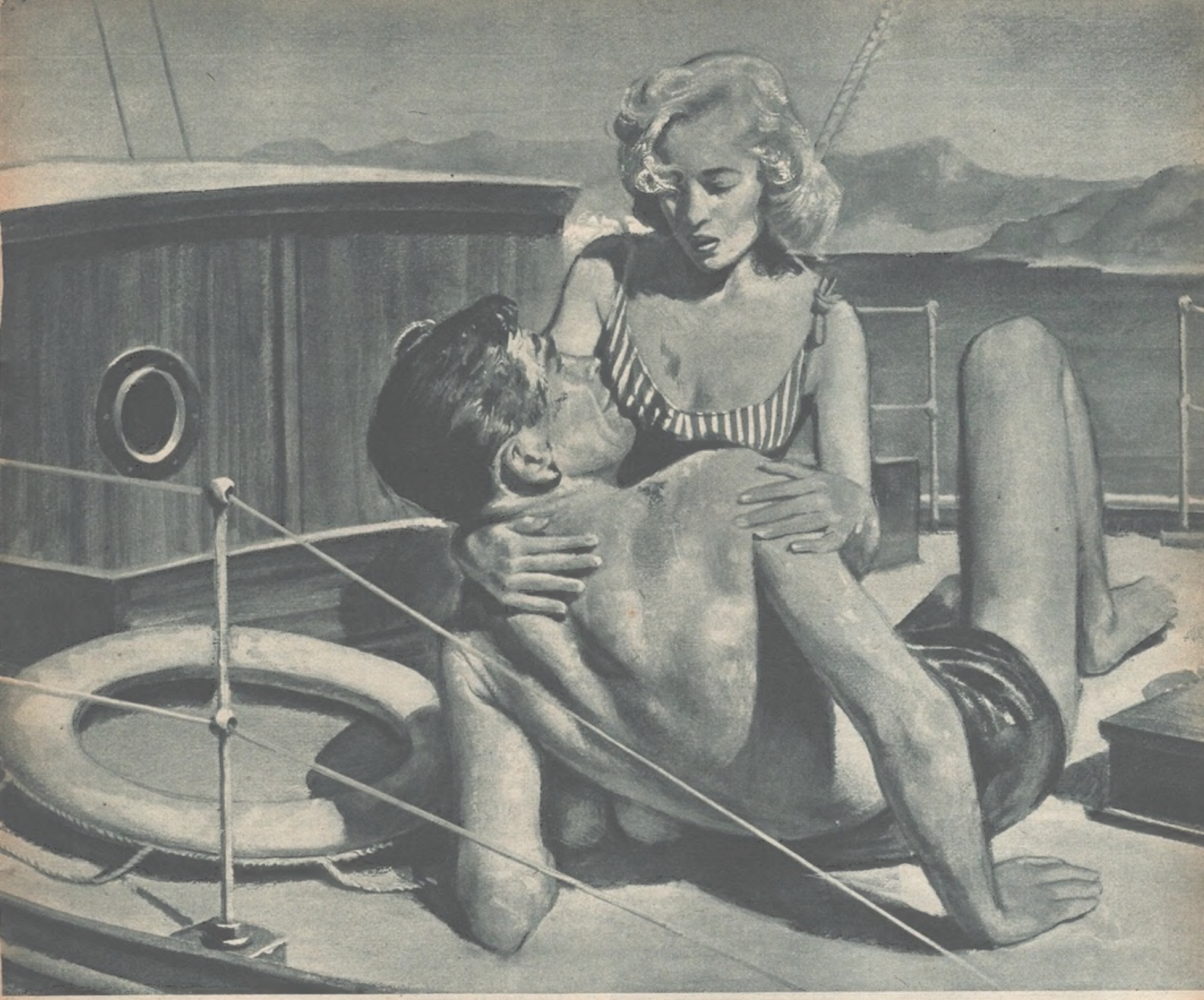
"I came to tell you she's in no fit condition to go to sea. She's a danger to her crew."

"I've a good crew. The boys keep the hull in order. But I have no one who understands mechanics, Mr. Legrand. I have to take their word for the engine. If you tell me she's unfit for sea, she certainly won't sail again."

"You should send her to Samarai for overhaul," he told her weakly. All the indignant speeches he had rehearsed fell to pieces when he looked at the frail and cheerful old lady.

"She's been a good ship, but she was past her time long ago," Mrs. Collings said. "We've tried to keep her running, but it's beyond us—Martie and me. Martie is my granddaughter," she explained. "Now we're faced with selling the Queen Emma, and it's like losing a limb. But we haven't the money and, if she goes to Samarai, she'll never come back to Palamasea, and that will be the end of us—the end of quite

"You'll do no good while you run with the old lady," warned Morrow. "There isn't room on Palamasea for the two of us"



Johnny's head was bursting with pain, but he smiled up at Martie. "You panicked," she told him. "I had to hit you. It was the only way to stop you"

a long story in these islands. Do change your mind about that drink, Mr. Legrand. Come in and sit a little while."

Johnny moved in and sat in one of the battered cane chairs that furnished the veranda, and looked on the brilliance of crotons and red hibiscus. The scent of frangipani filled the air.

As Mrs. Collings talked, his mind's eye created the pictures: the young girl—a smaller version of the golden girl, surely, he thought—landing at Palamasea with her husband fifty years before; this young couple running a trading store, with copra bringing in its steady competency; the flare-up of brief, insubstantial fortune when they acquired a schooner at last and fished for bêche-de-mer and trochus; the daughter, growing up and finally cutting adrift from the islands to make her home in Australia.

All the happy times—and then the disasters: the fall in copra and shell prices through the thirties, bringing them back from affluence to another beginning; the war that made them refugees; the husband killed by Japanese in his coast-watching post; the son-in-law, dead in Germany. And once again, the new beginning.

"You came back to start again?" Johnny marvelled.

"I had Martie," said Mrs. Collings. "It wasn't hard. The natives are my friends. We don't need much, you know—Martie and I. But we're finished now. We can't hang on much longer. We've had Mr. Morrow making it difficult for us, and pretty soon he'll have Palamasea to himself. That's what he's working for."

"Morrow? A thin, ugly-looking fellow? I think I met him."

MORROW, it seemed, had come to light after the war, an itinerant trader who settled on the island. At first the only effect had been to reduce the volume of the Collings' trade. That was bad enough. But then a consignment of trade tobacco failed to arrive at the Collings store—and Morrow had plenty. A consignment of Collings copra waiting on the jetty for the irregular schooner lost its tarpaulins, was saturated with rain, and had to be washed in sea water and re-smoked, a matter of infinite labour.

"When our drying-shed burned down this year we left copra alone," Mrs. Collings said. "There was no profit in it any more. There was no proof that anyone burned the shed. It could have been an accident. But Martie blamed Morrow, and she may have been right. We left copra alone and, of course, we lost the trade, because, with us out of it, Morrow refused to pay for copra except in trade goods. We turned to shelling—Palamasea has always had good trochus reefs."

"I heard that," nodded Johnny.

"We lost three boys on the local reefs. I wouldn't let them dive there any more."

Johnny lifted his eyebrows.

"Sharks," explained Mrs. Collings. "The sharks came in. We've never heard of trouble with sharks here before. It was just luck, I guess. But every time the Queen Emma went out and anchored on the reefs the sharks collected almost as though they had been called. So we were really desperate when Willing offered to take Emma through to the reefs and try his luck. The old lugger isn't fit to go so far, but we were hard-pushed. I was worried this last month, when they were overdue. So you'll know I was overjoyed to see her."

"I've brought bad news," Johnny said. "She hasn't a cargo."

"No shell?"

"Less than a quarter of a ton."

The old lady was silent for a moment. Then she said: "Oh, well, it's the end of the road. A quarter of a ton will pay the boys' wages, and then there'll be nothing left." She hesitated

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With Helen Christie (left) and Martin Wyldeck, Eleanor Summerfield made *My Wife's Sister* a television success after only a few weeks' run

Flu-stricken, Eleanor kept jumping into the Thames for a film scene. Between shots she was given brandy—"I've never had such a gay time"

In the musical *Golden City*, Eleanor sang a song which she later recorded. To save half a minute, she simply increased the tempo

The trouper who can't say no

by JOHN ENNIS

Eleanor Summerfield is a versatile star who never refuses a dangerous job. If a scene demands it, she risks her life

WHEN it happened, Eleanor Summerfield was on her knees behind a sofa. The weekly Granada television show *My Wife's Sister*, in which she stars, had reached a critical point where the hidden Eleanor had to go through a comedy routine of stealing pieces of cake, searching them for a valuable lost ear-ring and putting them back on their plates before the other members of the cast, sitting at afternoon tea, noticed anything wrong.

Invisible to the other actors, Eleanor had to base all her cake-stealing actions on the dialogue; but someone spoke the wrong line and everybody began to flounder.

The show faced disaster. Eleanor realized that she was the only person in a position to sort everything out. She rushed, on hands and knees, from one end of the sofa to the other, whispering lines for her colleagues to repeat, then fitting her actions to the words.

"Luckily my chums picked up the cues," she says. "All the right pieces of cake ended miraculously on all the right plates, and the viewers noticed nothing wrong."

Miss Summerfield, a slim honey-blonde who is one of the few British comediennes with sex appeal, has a highly developed professionalism which helped to push *My Wife's Sister* among the most popular ITV shows after the series had run only a few weeks. *My Wife's Sister* is considered to be the first British domestic comedy to rival American television imports such as *I Love Lucy*, *I Married Joan* and *The Burns And Allen Show*, though its budget allows for only one-tenth of the cash spent on producing these American series.

Eleanor has a formidable reputation for versatility. After training for Shakespeare and the classics at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, she has appeared in the last ten years in dramatic plays, revue, musical comedy, music hall farce, verse drama and high comedy, in the theatre, in films, on radio and on television; and a do-it-yourself programme that she performed for B.B.C. television brought 12,000 requests for a stool that viewers watched her make.

Bob Lennard, casting director of Associated British Picture Corporation, says: "She is an artist I can practically always use." The only recording she ever made, a song from the musical comedy *Golden City*, was chosen by the authoritative journal *The Gramophone* as a "record of the month." In making it she gratified worried recording technicians when she cut a half minute from the song by simply singing it at an increased tempo.

Eleanor has the reputation of working hard to make friends even with people whom others avoid. "She gets everybody on her side beforehand, and when the job starts everybody is shooting her way," says Frank Preston, the television do-it-yourself specialist. "But she can be quite sharp and sarcastic when she thinks it necessary."

Once, as a member of the panel of the B.B.C. television game *Find The Link*, she became annoyed with a pretentious contestant who would not answer a straight yes or no to any question. She crushed him by saying: "Aren't you a one?"

On another occasion she was rehearsing a play with a music hall comedian. Accustomed to sharing the stage only with stooges, the comic kept taking her by the hand and forcing her round so that her back was towards the audience.

Finally she stopped the rehearsal. Everyone in the room held his breath and the producer hid under a chair.

"Upstaging people is a subtle art," she told the comedian. "You are doing it far too obviously. I'll teach you the art of upstaging."

For fifteen minutes she gave the man a lesson in how to put other actors at a disadvantage. The lesson finished with both of them roaring with laughter. After this she had no more trouble and today they are good friends.

Her husband, Leonard Sachs, the actor and producer, complains that Eleanor is constitutionally unable to refuse difficult and dangerous tasks demanded of her by directors. "She will jump through hoops if somebody tells her to," he says.

PLAYING a gangster's moll in the film *No Way Back*, she tripped while running through a derelict churchyard in Wapping and hit her chest on the corner of a tombstone. "Fortunately they weren't recording sound at the time, or my language would have ruined the shot," she says. That night her doctor found that she had a fractured rib, but she went on with the film.

Working on the same picture, she spent a day on the roof of a bombed building close by St. Paul's Cathedral. The director, a Pole whose hobby was mountaineering, saw nothing unusual in asking Eleanor and an actor to run across a parapet, one yard wide, which had a drop of eighty feet on one side and fifty feet on the other.

The proposed journey was made more dangerous by two-foot iron spikes that stuck up at one-yard intervals along the parapet.

Recalling this a few weeks ago, Eleanor said: "I thought, I'm not going to be the first to say I won't do it."

The actor who was to run with her put an end to the director's scheme by turning green and preparing to faint. "He was the brave one, really," Eleanor says. "He couldn't stand heights and he had been up there fighting against

A scene from *My Wife's Sister*, in which Eleanor attempts to sing while carpenters work. She saved one show when it faced disaster

Eleanor, her husband, actor-producer Leonard Sachs, and son Robin. She refuses many parts to be with her children

vertigo all day. They had to stop it. They couldn't just go ahead and murder us. I was very much relieved."

In *Street Corner*, a film about women police, Eleanor, though not a strong swimmer, had to go into the Thames for a scene in which she rescued a small boy from drowning. She was warned that if she swallowed too much of the filthy river water only a stomach pump would save her.

The film crew assembled by Chelsea Bridge at ten o'clock one icy November night. Eleanor, who was recovering from influenza, dutifully entered the water, fully dressed. She had to go in again time after time for retakes, and after each dip she was dried, dressed in fresh clothing and given a nip of brandy.

"Delicious," she says. "By the sixth retake I didn't care whether I was in or out of the water. I've never had such a gay time in my life."

The film-makers immersed her in the Chelsea swimming bath for close-ups. Equipment kept going wrong and she was in the water for three-quarters of an hour, frozen and finally too tired to raise her legs to swim.

When eventually she was helped from the water her knees gave way and she sat on the floor... Everybody laughed, thinking she was clowning. She made a few comical remarks, then crawled to the dressing-room on hands and knees.

"They roared, and who was I to spoil their fun," Miss Summerfield says. "To this day, none of them knows I wasn't joking."

Eleanor's thoroughness shows even in the dullest tasks. In the television do-it-yourself series, *Learning How*, she had to drill and plug a brick wall after only one lesson. Experts from a firm which makes the wall plugs watched and reported: "She was technically perfect, but she did the job too easily; she could not have been drilling into brick."

Frank Preston, who taught her the job, says: "It was, in fact, a brick wall."

Miss Summerfield was born in 1921 in Bloomsbury, London. "As a child she was a shocker," says her sister, Mrs. Mary Hingston.

"I was a fearful liar," says Eleanor, "but two things happened when I was nine that made me vow never to lie again.

"I had a watch, my first, and it went wrong. The watch-repairer told Mother that I had put grease in it. Of course, knowing my reputation, nobody would believe me when I denied this. I was twenty-seven before the family accepted my word that I had never even opened the back of that watch.

"That same year I went with a friend to stay with her aunt in Plymouth. Before we left I had toothache, but I said nothing in case I wasn't allowed to go.

"The aunt took us on a ferry, with the idea of walking the long way home round a bay. Then my toothache suddenly started raging. I said: 'I have some money. Would you mind if we went back on the ferry. You see, I have toothache.'

"But Aunty had been primed about me. Very cross, she said: 'If you don't want to walk back, say so; don't start telling a lot of lies.' Next day, she tried to call my bluff by taking me to the dentist. When he pulled out my decayed tooth she realized that I had really been in pain."

Eleanor believes that her unwillingness to back out of dangerous and uncomfortable situations dates from this time. "I always feel that people won't believe me if I say I don't feel well."

A few weeks ago her husband telephoned to Manchester, where she was appearing in *My Wife's Sister*, to plead with the show's director to insist that she should see a doctor. "She is ill, but she will never say so herself," said Sachs. The doctor made her drop the show for two weeks.

When Eleanor was sixteen, two of her teachers, Mrs. Nora Butler and Mrs. Barbara Watson, at Essendine Road Council School, Maida Vale, persuaded her family to allow her to enter for an L.C.C. scholarship to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. She got the scholarship and trained at R.A.D.A. for two years.

War came, and she worked as a War Office secretary. "Acting like mad, I gave a convincing performance as a secretary," she says. "I was transferred to a secret American H.Q. where they were planning a little number called Overlord. In my spare time I acted dumb when friends discussed the possibility of a second front."

In November, 1947, Leonard Sachs telephoned to ask her to appear in a revue he was producing at the Players' Theatre. She refused; he insisted, so she went along just to humour this cross man on the telephone. They had never met before. They married a month later.

"She always makes up her mind quickly," says Mrs. Hingston. "But that was the quickest ever. At first the family was horrified."

The Sachs family, who live in a tall, old house in Bayswater, London, have two boys, Robin, six, and Toby, three. Robin attends an L.C.C. school in Paddington. Eleanor turns down many professional opportunities in order to be with the boys.

"She comes home from a hard day's rehearsing and baths the children," Sachs says. "When I have been rehearsing, all I can do is collapse for an hour on the sofa."

Eleanor says: "My career doesn't depend on youth or glamour. I hope to be acting when I am eighty. If being Mum means a few years out of my career, so what?" THE END

Far, far the mountain peak

by JOHN MASTERS

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN PHILLIPS

Peter Savage knew that they must go on to the summit. But would Emily understand if he came back . . . and not Gerry?

At the foot of the mountain they stopped to rest. She looked at him, her eyes steady on his face. She said: "I never knew you, Peter. I'm sorry. I understand—but Gerry doesn't and never will. . . ."

They had fallen suddenly, violently in love—Peter Savage, ruthlessly ambitious, and lovely Emily Fenton, who, until now, had always thought that one day she would marry Peter's greatest friend, Gerry Holcombe, the Earl of Wilcot.

Savage had two overriding ambitions: to become a ruler of India—he was at present Commissioner of the District of Rudwal—and to be the first man to climb Maru, a newly discovered Himalayan peak.

Now, in the summer of 1909, he was on leave in Switzerland, where he and Gerry had been tackling all the most difficult ascents in preparation for the assault on Maru. Emily, and Gerry's sister, Peggy, were there, too—both the girls were ardent mountaineers. Emily had always wanted to climb the Zmutt ridge of the Matterhorn, and last night, climbing secretly with Peter, she had done it.

Peter, she knew now, was the man she wanted. She could only feel sorry for Gerry—and for Peggy, too, who had been in love with Peter for years. She was waiting when Peter took her in his arms.

"Emily, marry me," he said simply.

She nodded. Her lower lip trembled, so that she had to bite it. Her eyes were full, and the far trees were blurred in the bright sun.

Peter said: "We'll go straight to the hotel and tell Gerry. . . ."

PART TWO

The Toast Is: "Maru!"

THEY set off together silently. There was nothing to be said now until they had seen Gerry. But a minute after they crossed the rude bridge over the Zmuttbach, Emily saw five men hurrying towards them—her father, three guides and Gerry, all carrying ropes and ice axes, and the guides also loaded with heavy rucksacks. Gerry, in the lead, ran forward, waving his ice axe in the air.

"Peter," he babbled, "are you all right? How was it, Emily? He took you over the Zmutt ridge, did he? Well, well, no one else could have done it." His eyes shone and his teeth flashed and his sunburned face became crinkled with pure joy.

Mr. Fenton came up and said gruffly: "Well, Peter, what's the meaning of this?"

Peter said coldly: "Uncle George, Emily and I are engaged. We are going to be married as soon as possible."

Emily kept her eyes on Gerry then, beseeching him to understand. She heard her father gasp; heard a muttering from the guides as they mumbled that they'd better be getting back; heard the crunch of the boots going away down the path, and, behind her, the roar of the Zmuttbach.

"This—this—is impossible," her father said at last.

"We're in love," she said, speaking at Gerry's frozen face.

Gerry turned away down the path towards Zermatt. Peter took Emily's hand and held it loosely.

Her father said: "Who will tell Peggy? Is your mind really made up, Emily? It's unbelievable, it's fantastic. Yesterday you hated him; today. . . ." Abruptly he drifted into silence.

"I'll tell Peggy," Peter said.

She stirred then. Her lover was unafraid and, when the way was difficult, they all fell back and left it to him, so his courage grew a hard, bitter edge.

She said: "No. I will."

He turned on her, ready to speak, his eyes glittering. She smiled, and after a moment he bent his head and kissed her hand. . . .

Extracts from letters written by Emily Savage from India . . . January, 1910, to May, 1913.

January 12, 1910.

Dearest Mally and Daddy,

It is only a month since we settled into the house—I must remember to call it a bungalow—at Rudwal, but already we are out of it again, and in camp. If Peter had his way, I don't think we'd ever be in the bungalow. We move nearly every day, and it is not a bit hot—in fact it is very cold at night, and at mid-day only hot in the sun.

The mountains are covered with snow right down to the foothills twenty miles behind Rudwal, and you have never imagined such mountains. Nothing prepares

Gerry kept working at his boots. "Are we going up, Peter, you and I?" he asked

At the head of the party was Gerry. "Peter!" he cried. "It's good to see you again. We had to drop in to tell you we're here . . . Emily!"

you for them. They make everything we know seem very insignificant. . . .

October 26, 1910.

Dearest Mally and Daddy,

Yes, we had heard that Harry Walsh and Peggy had been married. There was quite a lot about it in the local paper, the *Civil and Military*, because Peggy is the sister of "Lord Wilcot, whose informed interest in Indian affairs seems to be leading him toward the proconsulship of one of our Presidencies," as the paper said, and Harry is "one of the leading members of the Alpine Club."

I hope they will both be very happy, and I can't help hoping, too, that this will help Peggy to forget what has gone past. We have not heard from her since we were married.

Gerry wrote Peter a wonderful letter a couple of months ago, apologizing for what he called his caddishness, congratulating us, and saying the best man won. It made me feel like a prize cow or something, but I cried with happiness, and I thought Peter was going to, and you know what his self-control is. He wrote off at once, and I really believe that they are closer than ever now.

Gerry is coming out late in the cold weather, about the first of February, and will spend three months in Madras with the Lawleys before coming up here, and then he and Peter are going off to make a reconnaissance of Maru. . . .

May 9, 1911.

Dearest Mally and Daddy,

Gerry arrived a week ago, looking very well. It was the first time I had seen him since Zermatt. I was a little nervous just before he came, in spite of all the letters and everything seeming to be just as it used to be, only more so.

I should have known better. Gerry is a dear all through; there is nothing mean in him, nor ever was, and nothing seems to have altered between him and Peter. They plunged into calculations for their expedition at once, and I hardly got a chance to talk to Gerry till the next day. . . .

Gerry seems to be very drawn to India—and, of course, to Peter. He sends his love, by the way, and promises to write you a long letter tomorrow. He pretends to be moonstruck over a girl he had met on the boat, but I'm afraid that's only for my benefit. . . .

July 5, 1911.

Dear Mally and Daddy,

They're back yesterday! And they are sure there's a feasible way so that at least they can get a good chance at the summit. It's a huge pyramid apparently, irregular and split by ridges, with short glaciers between. Most of the ridges seem to end in tremendous ice cliffs, but they are sure they can get round at least one of them, on the south-east.

They are going to make the big attempt in 1913, and have decided to ask Harry Walsh. I hope he accepts, and that Peggy can come out with him and stay with me while they are away. She has written a couple of times since getting our wedding present, not as she used to, but politely enough. I am sure we can be real friends again if she would come here, especially with Peter away.

Being with Peter has put new life and determination in Gerry. He is going to spend a lot of time in the Lords between

Continued on page 31

Elizabeth Hinton, one of the assistants in Dr. Banfield's laboratory, does a micrometer test to check the firmness of a jelly

By bringing science into the kitchen, Francis Banfield solves the mysteries—and failures—of cooking. In his work, he needs . . .

A taste for pickles and jam

by RENÉ LECLER

Dr. Banfield and Miss Jean Colquhoun measure the consistency of jam. Jam is still a scientific mystery, he says

WHEN Dr. Francis Banfield was visiting a jam factory one day last summer the production manager showed him a jar of strawberry jam which had become too stiff and asked him if he knew the reason. Banfield checked the recipe, the times of boiling and the raw materials, and discovered no abnormal condition. Almost as an afterthought he asked the man if he knew what the barometric pressure had been on the day the jam was made.

"He looked at me as though I had suddenly gone mad," says Banfield. "But it is a fact that you can't have a hard-boiled egg on a mountain top because, as the barometric pressure goes down, the boiling point of the water might go below the setting point of the yolk and albumen."

They got the barometer readings from the Air Ministry and found that the barometric pressure had indeed been low so that on the day that the jam was made water boiled at 210 degrees Fahrenheit instead of 212. This made a difference to the solid content of the jam.

"Jam," says Banfield, who is head of the British Food Manufacturing Industries Research Association, "is still one of our biggest fields of research. We've been studying it for thirty years and there is still a lot of things we don't know."

But there is one old wives' tale he can explode: no factory anywhere spends its time making white raspberry pips to satisfy the housewife. Since customers prefer a very white pip, Banfield is trying to find out why some raspberry pips stay white in the jam and others don't.

Banfield, a short, ebullient Londoner of fifty-five, heads a team of twenty-four chemists, physicists, bacteriologists and food technologists who work constantly to improve the nation's food, its appearance and its taste. In a handsome new laboratory building at Leatherhead, Surrey, they study and experiment on products ranging from pickled onions to marshmallows, issue about forty publications every year, help food exporters, and advise the government on food subjects.

Twenty-five per cent of their budget of £63,000 a year comes as a government grant; the rest is in subscriptions from more than five hundred food manufacturing firms of all kinds, including Britain's biggest canners and a man who cures four sides of bacon every week in a Bristol back room.

Some problems that they tackle may affect millions of people; occasionally, though, Banfield comes across something more personal. Lunching in a large provincial hotel, he discovered some maggots crawling across a plate of ham. He called the chef to have a look at them. The man said: "That's funny. . . . I thought they were bits of sawdust." Says Banfield: "It seemed useless to point out that sawdust should not have been on the ham either."

Other problems facing Banfield's team are of purely academic interest. Recently they have been seeking the reasons why sausages burst out of their skins when put in the frying pan. "Personally I like the crisp bits at the end of a sausage," says Banfield, "but some people don't, and it is a phenomenon we have to study."

Changing public tastes often present problems for Banfield's scientists. When pickle manufacturers discovered some years ago that people preferred a milder pickle they reduced the length of the brining process, but this cut down the shelf life of their product. Banfield's men have now developed a form of pasteurization which trebles the life of pickled vegetables. "The most important thing in this research," says

Banfield, "is to be able to measure scientifically the changing factors which affect the life or quality of a product."

Faced with the problem of measuring the chewiness of marshmallow, Banfield's assistant, Dr. Mac Taylor, devised a conical plunger supported by a balanced beam, placed a marshmallow sample in a container underneath and used water pressure to move the cone downwards. The amount of water needed to force the plunger into the marshmallow gave him a resistance figure. This method has now also been used for testing toffee.

To test the consistency of jam, Banfield placed it in a square container and plunged a revolving spade into it; the force required to turn the spade yielded a unit of measurement now universally accepted.

A probe which Banfield devised some years ago to test the saltiness of bacon by electrical means came in useful one day recently when a bacon manufacturer told him that he was getting complaints that his product was sometimes too salty and at other times not salty enough. Banfield took his probe to the factory and plunged it into sides of bacon ready for shipment. The saltiness varied a good deal. Thinking that the strength of the curing brine was wrong, he first examined it in the tank in which the sides are immersed for a long period. It was correct.

Moving over to the first brining process in which a curer places injection needles into the bacon, he noticed that the man always put the needle in the same number of times: "Fat or lean, large or small, all the sides got just the same amount of salt, whereas the man should have calculated just how much salt each piece of bacon needed."

Most manufacturers call Banfield when something goes wrong. Some years ago, several meat pie makers complained that small amounts of mould were appearing on the jelly inside the crusts. Banfield visited the factories and found them clean and up to date. Then some of his research workers made similar pies in the extensive experimental kitchens in a wing of the laboratory building and examined them scientifically. Before long they discovered that the mould always formed on the jelly just beneath the air holes in the pie crust and that gave them the answer.

When the pie cooled, the air inside the crust contracted and outside air was drawn in, bringing with it particles of dust bearing mould spores which are always present in normal atmosphere. The remedy lay in cooling the pies in dust-tight chambers, a practice most makers now follow.

Raw materials for food products imported from abroad occasionally give Banfield some trouble despite the stringent tests to which they are subjected. Not long ago a manufacturer of canned beans asked him to taste a large batch of his product which had an "off" flavour. The beans were analysed and found satisfactory.

Banfield studied every one of about twenty factory processes and finally asked to inspect the beans as they arrived from a tropical country: he discovered that a harmless insecticide, used to protect the beans during shipment, had altered their flavour.

THE association's information department, headed by Brian Knapp, constantly advises British food exporters on the conditions in other countries. Some years ago a canner who had orders from a remote country with a high average altitude told Banfield that his customers were complaining of cans becoming "blown." Banfield's technicians experimented and found that when canned goods travel by air or are kept at high altitude the can may become misshapen though the contents are quite safe. He was able to advise a small change in the vacuum packing process which eventually made the contents look, as well as taste, good.

Some countries have stringent regulations on the labelling of contents. One man who recently exported a consignment of Christmas puddings to the United States had them returned to him. They had been labelled "plum puddings" and the American analysts had failed to find any plums in the product.

"Take this to its logical conclusion," adds Banfield, "and you won't be able to export such things as bulls' eyes and jelly babies."

The most persistent trouble for exporters is the question of colour additives. Most countries have lists of between ten and twenty chemical colours which they admit as harmless: but there is no pink additive used in confectionery which is acceptable to all, and sweet manufacturers cannot send a certain green sweet to New Zealand.

Despite the fact that colour may be added at the infinitesimal rate of one part to 300,000, some countries use their regulations as protective barriers. After a legal battle lasting two years, Banfield and his staff have just helped to vindicate a manufacturer whose products were banned from an Asian country on the grounds that he had used the wrong colour.

In their experimental kitchens fitted with steam retorts, can sealers, jam boilers and sausage machines, Banfield and his scientists can duplicate almost every food manufacturing process.

"We do not cook as the housewife would," he says, "but more scientifically, weighing every ingredient and timing every process. After all, chemistry is very close to cookery."

He produces foodstuffs for analysis and also for tasting. Every morning, any member of the staff who wants a second opinion on a piece of taste research circulates two or three varied samples to his colleagues. "We have to be very careful in this," explains Banfield, "because not everyone is fitted to taste all things. I am always left out of the panel when it comes to fatty products. I just wouldn't know one from the other."

Despite the most intensive precautions in food factories, mistakes still occur. Knapp remembers one day being called in by a confectioner to examine a batch of marshmallow which unaccountably would not set. Finding every process to be correct, he asked for a sample in a cup, put his finger in it and tasted it. He pulled a wry face: workmen had added salt instead of sugar. He says: "With all their precision testing and timing machines, they had just forgotten to taste the stuff."

Banfield, who lives with his wife and three children in an attractive house in Leatherhead, talks of food like a man whose palate has not been spoiled by so many experiments. His only professional idiosyncrasy is that he likes to smell a dish before he tastes it. But he keeps his scientific opinions strictly to the laboratory and makes it a rule not to apply scientific deductions to his wife's cooking.

He never ceases to be surprised by the faith that food manufactures place in the workings of science. Recently a manufacturer asked him for a special compound powder which, on the addition of water, would separate into three neat layers: jelly, blancmange and custard.

Says Banfield: "I am afraid we are not that clever yet. If I discovered such a powder I might go into business myself." THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

Pickles are prepared for a tasting session. Banfield says: "We have to be careful because not everyone is fitted to taste all things"

To test the saltiness of bacon, Joseph Selby uses an electric probe devised by Banfield. A side of bacon should be of uniform saltiness throughout

The laboratory has instruments which test the frothiness of a beaten egg. "We cook scientifically," says Banfield

The music stopped, and Tim made a wild dive to pop up in front of Mary. Her rightful partner gave way with good humour

The Feckless Chap

by ***DUDLEY HOYS***

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HESELTINE

Perhaps Mary was right—perhaps he was selfish. But how could Tim help himself? After all, a fellow's what he is . . . it's just the way he's made

FOLK in Iredale often said: "Wonder what'll happen to Tim Brewster?" The only one who never did any wondering was Tim himself. At twenty-five he gave the impression of being utterly carefree.

Slim, sprightly, small-boned, he had eager brown eyes that always seemed to shine with the pleasure of being alive. In some things he took after his dead Cumbrian father. But he had in him, too, a big streak of his mother, an offcomer from the south, gay, charming, with little sense of responsibility.

After she died, almost every penny spent, Tim stayed on at Whinbrow, that toy box of a cottage perched by the rough lonnin above the dale, and eked a scant living out of a pig or two and some hens. Not that he was lazy or unskilled. Helping neighbours at clipping, dipping, hay and so forth, he made a good job of it while he was at work.

But he reckoned there was more in life than earning money. He could be distracted by a butterfly flickering through the sunshine, a peregrine stalling in the sky, some tiny movement on the fells that suggested a fox and sent him up there to find out.

Lasses cared for him in an amused fashion. He was lively, fleeting company. None took him seriously. Their idea of a regular chap was somebody who aimed at getting on. Tim skipped through the days in his harmless, untroubled manner—until the night of the dance after the May Meeting, when the rams hired for breeding are returned to their owners. Then something happened that fairly bowled him over.

He was standing just inside the schoolroom doorway with several other young fellows, watching the couples passing around, when there drew level with him an elderly, grey-haired man and a dark-haired girl. She had an oval face, wide and serene eyes the colour of harebells, and an expression so quietly lovely that it set him gaping.

He nudged his neighbour, George Derwent, dour, solid, and engaged to Aggie Porter. "Who's yon?" he whispered.

"Him? John Slade. Moved into Hazelrigg this March quarter. Lass is his daughter Mary."

Tim said wistfully: "Has she got a chap?"

George chuckled. "Don't know. Best ask her."

"But I don't know the lass. How am I to——?"

"There'll be a Paul Jones soon. Join in an' take your chance. Aye."

Ten minutes later, one of an encircling ring of men, Tim made a wild dive the moment the music stopped, and popped up in front of Mary Slade. The partner who had halted opposite her was good-humoured, and gave way. Tim caught Mary's left hand, and his right went round her waist.

"I can't dance," he said, "but I'll nay tread on your feet."

He was so innocently excited and exultant that Mary Slade burst out laughing. "You'd better not. These are new shoes," she said. She looked up at Tim as they danced. "D'you usually cut in like that?"

"Me? By gocks, nay! I've never done it before. Couldn't help meself."

Before the evening was over Tim had partnered her three times, and he went back to Whinbrow softly whistling and thinking about her. Getting up with the rising sun and a ripple of breeze from the south-west, he collected his rod, dug some worms from a patch of soil below the window, and went trudging up a thousand feet among the baby brackens to a tarn where the brown trout were beginning to snatch at the first break of fly. He caught five, averaging about six ounces apiece. They were for her.

At ten o'clock he was walking towards Hazelrigg. The white, frothing blossom of bird-cherry growing on a sod-dyke caught his eye. He picked some sprigs and laid them across the basket of trout. At twenty past ten he was knocking at the kitchen door. "For you," he said, as she opened it, holding up his offerings.

Mary gave him a look that was neither serious nor smiling, and thanked him in a tone that held a hint of puzzlement.

"I might have caught more," Tim said, "but I couldn't wait any longer. 'Tis hours since I saw you last."

She began to frown, changed her mind, and laughed. In no time they were chatting easily, and it came to her that he was scarcely more than a happy, inconsequent schoolboy.

"How old are you, Tim?" she asked.

"Twenty-five."

She stared. "I'd have thought you weren't more than. . . . But never mind. Why aren't you working this morning?"

He explained something of his way of living, and she said soberly: "It doesn't sound right to me. From what you say, your bit at Whinbrow isn't a full-time job. A man oughtn't to waste half his life playing."

He flinched. "Aye, mebbe. I'll get summat regular, if that's how you feel."

Mary said quietly: "It's nothing to do with how I feel. You ought to be ambitious in a sensible way. Every man ought. . . ."

Within a week Tim had been taken on at Plumgarth. Every few evenings he called at Hazelrigg, proud to tell Mary of how he was sticking to things. By now she had a curious fondness for him, hard to explain. He irritated

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"Nay, keep your distance," Tim yelled. "If wall gives, you'll be killed"

THESE MEN ARE DANGEROUS (3) **by DERRICK HARRISON, M.C.**

We go buccaneering in broad daylight

My orders were clear: we must hit the enemy whenever we could. So my patrols came into the open, flying the Union Jack. And the startled Germans couldn't believe their eyes

ALL the way, "Curly" Hall trod hard on the accelerator. The jeep bounded through the French village of Toucy and on, at top speed, up a narrow dusty lane. Ahead of us had gone Bob Melot, our intelligence officer, in a desperate bid to search a crashed German plane for documents.

We were two hundred miles behind the enemy lines. It was August, 1944, ten weeks after D-Day. The battle was still being fought bitterly in Normandy. As members of the Special Air Service—spies and saboteurs in uniform—we were keen to lay hands on German secrets and get them to London.

When Chevrier, a local Maquis leader, had seen the crashed aircraft, Bob's was the only jeep in camp. Knowing that papers on the dead pilot might give clues to the enemy's plans for resisting the invasion, he had set off, risking a clash with the troops who were certain to be on their way to guard the wreckage.

Hall and I had got back from patrol and, on learning where Bob had gone, had left immediately. Our hope, a slender one, was of catching up with him in time to give support.

Suddenly, from over the hill, came the noise of firing—the sharp crack of rifles and the sound of Bob's automatic.

Hall shouted grimly: "We're too late!"

A vehicle could be heard approaching. I tensed behind my machine-guns, expecting to meet an armoured car. But round the corner tore a jeep. At the wheel sat Bob, unscathed, smiling, exhilarated at having been in action. "Germans arrived before I could reach the plane," he said. "A whole company of them. I had to withdraw."

Hall turned our jeep and we raced to our camp in the forest.

From now on, one thing was definite. A new, more dangerous, phase of our mission had begun. Since parachuting into the middle of France a fortnight earlier we had managed to lie low, spying on troops and defences. Now we had ventured into the open. No longer was

As the woman handed him the tray, Richardson warned her: "If the Germans learn about this you will be shot." She smiled. "I'm aware of that"

ILLUSTRATION BY LAURENT

there any possibility of escaping the Germans' attention.

Two thousand White Russian soldiers, employed by the enemy to crush French resistance and noted for their brutality, were in nearby Troyes. And because Hitler had called us "terrorists" and ordered that we were to be "exterminated," clearly every effort would be made to hunt and kill us.

This had already happened at Thimory, where an S.A.S. party similar to mine was sharing a forest camp with a Maquis group. German infantry attacked in strength. Flame-throwers set fire to the trees, making the forest a furnace.

The camp had to be abandoned. Some S.A.S. men, under Lieutenant Parsons, with an American airman who had crashed in the area, got into a civilian car and were coming out through the flames when they were chased by eighteen German patrol cars. One of them overtook the S.A.S. car, firing as it passed.

"Break for the woods!" cried Parsons.

Those who could, leaped from the doomed vehicle. A man named Wilson was hit twice in the face and lost consciousness. When he recovered, he was alone in the back of the car. The American, who had also been wounded, lay sprawled on the road outside.

Wilson stared, horrified, as the American tried feebly to crawl under the car out of sight. There were two shots. The American lay dead.

Four Germans, who had not noticed that Wilson was still in the car, walked up with a bomb, intending to blow it up. Wilson waited until they were fifteen yards away. Then he raised his revolver slowly and carefully to a hole in a shattered window. He killed three Germans as they stood gaping at him, and the fourth fled.

Wilson was captured and forcibly interrogated at Orleans, but was freed by the Americans.

S.A.S. jeeps had twin machine-guns at front and back. On one patrol Richardson (left) took a German prisoner. The man, whose identity card is shown right, willingly worked at the camp

OUR camp was deep in the forest, and we could only trust that we would hear an impending attack, or be warned by one of the Maquis groups in the neighbourhood. I began to organize offensive patrols.

I had five jeeps, four of them mounted with twin machine-guns at front and back. The three-men crews were chosen in turn from myself and twenty-six others. This force was ideal for the hit-and-run job of destroying convoys which passed through central France on their way to the front. It was small and elusive, yet could take targets of almost any size.

The jeeps roamed over an area of five hundred square miles. News of convoys flowed in constantly from villagers and from the Maquis. We radioed information to London, where it was pooled with reports from other S.A.S. units. In return, we were told of convoys heading for our area. Some targets were met entirely by accident, and the surprise was mutual.

Sergeant McDiarmid and his crew, driving on the long, straight road from Toucy to Mézilles, breasted a hill and ran into an enemy bicycle patrol. Instantly, the Germans abandoned their machines and fled into a wood.

"Grab your carbines and after them," ordered Mac.

The undergrowth was thick. The Germans could not get far. There was a brisk exchange of shots. A few minutes later, Mac and his men emerged with eight very frightened prisoners. He then had a problem: what to do with them. We had no facilities for starting a prisoners-of-war cage.

"Hand them over to the Resistance," suggested one of the crew.

The prisoners were driven several miles, and Mac explained his predicament to a Resistance member. The Frenchman declared that he understood the situation perfectly. "We will take care of them," he promised.

They had a round of drinks, and Mac's patrol set off. As they left the town, however, they realized that the French idea of "taking care" of prisoners could be drastic. On the summer air came the crackle of Sten gun fire. . . .

German convoys tried for a while to protect themselves by interspersing lorries with car-loads of French hostages. At first we hesitated to attack, but Maquis leaders said: "You must shoot just the same. If the hostages are killed, their lives are their contribution to the war."

We patrolled at night with headlamps blazing, the theory being that it was the last thing British "terrorists" were expected to do. Many Germans, anyway, could not believe that the S.A.S. were operating so deep behind their lines. Lieutenant Jock Riding had an accident with his jeep while an enemy convoy approached. Eighty lorries, packed with soldiers, roared past him—and not one of them stopped.

During daylight, we drove as fast as the road

Padre Fraser McLusky was trapped in a tree when he parachuted into France. He cut himself free, and fell twenty feet

allowed, hands on our guns and Union Jacks flying from our wireless aerials.

The flags, a buccaneering touch, served the practical purpose of identification. Once, we tore round a right-angled bend and almost crashed into a wall of foliage laid across our path. The jeep screamed to a halt. Around us, facing us, were men behind rifles—a Maquis ambush. The flags had undoubtedly saved us from being wiped out on the spot. Without them we could have been mistaken for Germans in a captured vehicle.

Greatly shaken, I protested to the men's commander: "Why didn't you warn us?"

"The fault is yours," he replied. "*We* should have been warned by *you*."

Thereafter, the letter "R" for Resistance, in Morse—dit dah dit—sounded on our horn when coming to a bend, prevented similar scares.

Ambush-laying, we discovered, was in other respects a strain for all parties concerned. Tension mounted easily, rapidly, and sometimes unbearably.

Having heard one afternoon that a convoy might be coming through, we set up guns in a fine position overlooking an open stretch of the road. We waited. And we waited. Then Staff Sergeant-Major Shaw, lying in the tall grass beside me, whispered: "What's this?"

A German soldier, rifle smartly at the slope, was being marched down the road by an n.c.o. He was posted a hundred and fifty yards directly in front of us. It seemed that the convoy was due, and he was guarding the route.

"I could pick him off nicely," Shaw reflected.

"We'll stay for the convoy," I said.

An hour later, the soldier was replaced by another one, plump and bespectacled.

The newcomer began marching up and down with perfect self-assurance, but the more keenly we looked at him, the more he sensed that he was being watched. Our stares preyed on him. His moustache twitched. He gripped his rifle more tightly, his marching became quicker, his glances more furtive.

We, on the other hand, could not be certain that he hadn't noticed us and was trying, in some way, to signal to an S.S. headquarters which we knew was up the road.

Finally, at the end of two of the most anxious hours I have endured, the German could contain his nervousness no longer. He lifted his rifle and, without apparently taking aim, fired at where we lay. The bullet sang through the

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Phantom Princess

As a man of science, I cannot admit that she exists. And yet—I saw her by ARTHUR MAYSE

My morning survey of Saul Prince's forbidden valley revealed neither the headless skeletons nor bleached skulls which vulgar repute claimed for it. If phantom skirlings disturbed the night, I had been too exhausted after our traverse from the Tzwahalis headwaters to be wakened by them; and, viewed through my binoculars, the creature on the slope above me proved to be a very ordinary wild goat.

So much for native superstition, I reflected as I cased my glasses. I had tracked the myth of the Mukhalin bear an arduous two hundred miles by logging truck, launch and canoe, and had ended my journey perspiring under a pack heavier than any middle-aged naturalist should be required to shoulder.

At the moment, crouching away from the wind to light my pipe, I admitted to a certain irritation with my friend Carveth-Wells of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, whose account had launched me in quest of the Mukhalin, the great white ghost-grizzly of the British Columbia cordillera. It occurred to me, belatedly, that on the same occasion and with no less solemn manner, Inspector Carveth-Wells had spun me a tale of a giant mosquito which, as a young constable on Arctic service, he had trained to paddle an Eskimo kyak.

In this sceptical mood I was utterly unprepared for the sight that greeted me when I looked up with pipe alight. No crackling of brush reached me over the din of the creek, but on the far bank the huckleberry buckled outward. The massive head that poked through was pure white, as was the throat and the hackled fur of the shoulder hump.

I continued to squat in the lee of a boulder while the grizzly advanced at a rolling jog to the stream's edge, twice pausing to peer backward into the forest of mixed spruce and hemlock from which he had emerged. I glanced about me for my rifle, remembering only then that it leaned against a tree trunk in our camp.

I had not heard Saul Prince approach, but the Indian was at my side, his coarse-woven beret—or, more strictly, tam-o'-shanter—pushed back from his broad forehead, his .270 Winchester laid across his arm. He stared at the white grizzly, which reared on its haunches and eyed us with the shortsighted peering of its kind. Foam dribbled from its jaws. Its barrel heaved as if from hard running.

"I believe this specimen is adequate," I told Saul Prince. "Since I seem to have forgotten my rifle, I must ask you to shoot it for me."

My guide shook his head. The expression on his heavy featured face puzzled me. With obvious reluctance he placed his rifle in my hands. Since I derive no pleasure from killing, I need only state that the 130-grain open point bullet did its work efficiently, and that the bear, after wallowing through the creek in an abortive charge, died with its snout forty-six inches from my boots, a distance verified by later measurement.

I had found Saul Prince phlegmatic to the point of taciturnity, but I confess I expected some show of elation from one who, apart from sharing in a notable contribution to natural science, had assured himself of a handsome bonus.

"S'pose you make up the packs while I skin him out, Doc," he suggested, glancing at the sun which had declined only slightly from the meridian. "That way, we can get rolling in two, maybe three hours."

"But why?" I demanded in complete surprise. Field preparation of a specimen, and especially such a prize as this, is not a task to be hurried. "I can see no need whatever for haste. I hope to secure a female as well, and possibly a cub." His lack of enthusiasm had nettled me into brusqueness. I added: "And I'm no iron man. We'll rest one day, Saul, hunt three, then make what I trust will be a leisurely exit."

"I don't like the weather." My companion frowned into the north-east, where the blue sky was dulling to grey. "Snow catches us in here; it could be rough. You've got your white bear, Doc. Me, I think we ought to pull out."

"Nonsense!" I told him genially. The season was early for snow. In any event, should a blizzard strike, we had a snug fly-camp in the timber, aluminium-framed snowshoes lashed to our packboards, and concentrated foods to sustain us at least two weeks. "But I do agree with you about the skinning," I added. "We'll proceed with that at once."

We did so, the sun beating on our shoulders with mellow warmth, the forest quiet around us. What thoughts Saul Prince entertained, I did not try to surmise. I noted, however, that my guide's rifle was never out of reach, and that at no time did he turn his back on the dense cover across the stream.

Suddenly Saul Prince said: "What you make of this, Doc?" With his skinning-knife he indicated the left rear paw and lower leg. The thick, creamy fur was splotched and matted with blood.

"Marks of a fight," I ventured. "Probably with another of his kind."

"Wasn't any bear worried him," the Indian said. "This fella was chased, he was run clean down to the edge of the timber."

"Wolves, perhaps?" A most unlikely conjecture, offered absently. My attention was upon the short, thin-bladed knife in Saul Prince's fist. He laid it aside now, with another uneasy scowl at the sun, and I reached for it, my curiosity thoroughly roused.

Plaited leather, black and ancient, covered the haft. The blade had been worn to a mere slip of steel. But its counterpart may be seen in any museum's weapons-room; it was the skean-dhu, the black dirk of the Scottish clansman.

"How did you come by this, Saul?" I inquired.

The Indian shrugged. "Had it from my brother. . . . Look, Doc, I might as well say it. This bear was driven to you. They made us a gift of him."

"They?"

"Ah, you know who I mean." His voice dropped to an apprehensive mutter. "Them. The Old People."

In my work I have learned how real and how terrifying can be the chimera with which primitive races becloud their lives. I know also how reluctant they are to refer bluntly to the object of their superstitious imaginings. When he spoke of "The Old People" my guide had in mind the Mukhalin, the hairy giants of the folklore of this district.

Inspector Carveth-Wells had touched on them briefly, with his customary humour. "When a young girl goes missing," he had told me in his office at division headquarters, "it's always the Mukhalin who've gaffed her. If a white prospector bushwhacks into the hinterland and doesn't come out, who d'you think has clobbered him and bagged his head? The Mukhalin, of course! Always the Mukhalin.

"But," the inspector had continued in his hearty way, "you aren't likely to run into any of that claptrap with Saul Prince. Saul has been in there. He took a party of sportsmen just last year, as a matter of fact—and fetched 'em out with their heads in place."

Now, though, I realized that my guide's veneer of white culture was thinner than Carveth-Wells had led me to believe. Staring at me with

Thunder filled my ears and my brain. There was a dream with many faces. And then one face alone—a woman's, fierce and wild and beautiful

ILLUSTRATED BY COLEMAN

moisture glistening at his hairline, he was plainly a frightened man.

"Have you ever seen the Mukhalin, Saul?" I asked him.

"No."

"Have you met anyone, Indian or white, who has seen them?"

"Yeah."

"May I ask who?"

Saul replied, in a voice all but inaudible: "My brother."

It was by no means the answer I had expected, but I accepted it calmly, continuing to employ the soothing address one would use to a disturbed child.

"And where is your brother now, Saul?"

"I don't know," he mumbled. "All I'm sure of is, we got to get out of here."

With my guide in his present state of nerves, there seemed no virtue in pressing the matter. We finished stripping the enormous pelt.

By mid-afternoon the hide was fleshed, rubbed with black pepper and stretched between saplings to catch the drying wind. And not until then did Saul Prince break his brooding silence.

"Doc," he told me, "I was awake all last night. I'm going to sleep for an hour. Then we're lighting out."

He unrolled his sleeping-bag in our lean-to. When I next glanced at him he was deep asleep.

I watched him, more perturbed over the change in him than I cared to admit. It was the virtual breakdown of my guide rather than the cutting short of my stay that worried me. Until now I had regarded him as a man of admirable strength and balance. Now, in a scant three hours, I had been forced to a radical revision of judgment.

Moving quietly, I dropped a left-over bannock in my pocket and picked up my rifle. It was possible that Saul might waken in a more rational frame of mind. If by a thorough scout of the surrounding country I could persuade him that his fears were groundless, he might yet be won from his insistence on a departure that smacked of panic flight.

In two hours of travel, sometimes along gravelled creek bars, again through open meadows dotted with timber clumps, I discovered no sign of habitation, whether present or past. I did find bear spoor near the valley's eastern limit where the trough narrowed between steep cliffs, but from shape, size and claw indentures I satisfied myself that the prints were those of the common black bear.

I began crossing a jumble of boulders below the northern cliff, and at this point, since I have never been a believer in extra-sensory perception, my account becomes difficult. I know only that, urged by an instinct of self-preservation no less primitive than Saul Prince's shadowy terrors, I hurled myself close against the wall of the defile. The rest was thunder that filled my ears and my brain, dust in a choking, blinding cloud, a great shock upon my head. Then an echoing silence laced with fiery flashes, and a confused continuing dream.

The dream had many faces. Then one face alone, a woman's, fierce and wild, and beautiful. . . .

WHEN I recovered consciousness I was on my way back down the valley. My rifle was gone. I hobbled with the aid of a crotched branch. Blood had matted my beard and dried on a shirt reduced to fluttering rags. When I fumbled a hand to my head, it came away smeared with a sticky crimson at which I gaped stupidly. I limped on. "The Mukhalin," I kept muttering to myself. "No dream, no dream. . . ."

Twilight was verging on darkness when I staggered into a vaguely familiar meadow, buffeted by wind, scarcely feeling the sting of hard-driven snow. I saw the flicker of firelight at the edge of the timber, and the ghost-bear's pelt swaying disembodied there. A lesser shape confronted me. I teetered by it, gawking down at it foolishly. Crossed sticks had been planted in the heather and a shirt draped over them, the whole translated into a parody of man by the white tam-o'-shanter that crowned it.

I had detached Saul Prince's headgear when Saul hurried out to me. "What's this?" I asked.

"A scarebear," my guide told me. In the dusk, with snow swirling around us, my condition could not have been at once apparent to him. "I rigged him 'case grizzlies come."

I presume, then, that Saul caught me as I toppled. When I roused, I was in my sleeping-bag in the lean-to and my head was crudely bandaged. Saul crouched in the mouth of the shelter, his broad back towards me, his rifle across his knees. He heard me stir and turned a sombre face, the firelight ruddy upon it.

"What happened, Doc?"

"I'm by no means sure." I framed the words with an effort, for my throat was parched and a dull ache throbbed through my head. "I believe I was caught in a rock fall."

"Who fixed you the crutch?"

"Why, I presume I did," I replied, although I had no faintest recollection of so doing.

The Indian shook his head. Presently he reached for the crotched branch and lifted it so that it caught the light.

"You cut that with your knife?"

Blurred though my wits were, I found his point obvious. The branch was thick as my wrist. Even a sharp and heavy knife could not have severed it so cleanly, at a single stroke.

"I'll tell you what cut it, Doc," Saul said. "A rig heavier'n any machete you ever saw, with a straight blade grooved for the blood to run down and a sort of basket for a man to fit his hand into. It would take off a head the way it clipped that branch. A sword you'd call it."

"You've seen this . . . instrument?" I asked.

"Once." He gazed down at me, and he was calmer now. "My brother was packing it when he come to me here, a year ago."

"Did he give it a name?" What the Indian had described, roughly but with accuracy, was that other Scottish weapon, the straight-bladed, basket-hilted claymore of the clans.

"He said the Mukhalin killed with them." For a moment Saul stared hard into the blinding snow-curtain beyond the timber. Then he said, with an odd smile on his face. "Do they come for us, Doc, it'll take more than any scarebear with a Mukhalin hat on it to hold 'em off. You might as well know it. There's a good chance we'll both be dead before morning."

"But they drove the bear to us," I said. I remembered something else now, too. "The woman bathed my face in water, she gave me the crutch. They let me go."

"They've given us two warnings," Saul said. He laid his hand to my forehead, and his mouth tightened grimly. "You're burning up, Doc. You'd die in an hour, did I try to pack you out." He tugged the eiderdown higher around my shoulders. "You said there was a woman with them?"

"In white doeskin," I told him. "She was no dream."

"Did you see anyone else?" It was my guide who spoke reasonably now, as if to a hysterical child. "Think hard, Doc. Try and remember. An Indian, maybe? Big man, big as me, scar on his neck, couple of gold teeth in front?"

I shaped my lips to a "No." Through the silence I could hear the hiss of blown snow.

"I've never told no one," Saul Prince said. "Not the police inspector, not even August's wife. But we got a long night ahead of us. It don't matter too much now if I tell you."

He resumed his crouch, brooding with the heavy rifle on his knees. His voice when he next spoke was low, almost abstracted.

"August, that's my younger brother. He was good to look at, Doc, mighty good, even with those gold teeth and the knife scar on his face. He had a way with him, got what he wanted always.

"Three years back we went hop-picking to Washington State. Both of us fell for the same girl. Mary Starr her name was then. Me, I didn't have a chance. August married her quick, and he tired of her quicker.

"It wasn't a year later he got chasing another woman. August and this girl's husband, they tangled at a party, both of them mean drunk. It turned into a cutting fight. The other man got killed. August, he took to the hills.

"I helped him like I'd always done. Sneaked his gun and a grub pack to him where he was

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IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

Zenon Dixon tells of the hilarious adventures of his amazing chimpanzee "family." Intelligent and mischievous, they are natural entertainers. They smoke . . . steer boats . . . and try to undress visitors

My wagonload of monkeys

Prize crops from your garden

by PERCY THROWER

A few tricks of the trade can make the smallest plot yield a bumper harvest, and bring show-quality vegetables to your table

Easy - to - follow rules will help to bring results, says Percy Thrower. For show work careful lifting is essential

EFFICIENT cultivation is half the secret of growing vegetables good enough to win a prize at a show—or grace the table of a queen.

My father taught me that the plot for a vegetable garden should be dug two spits deep. Modern practice suggests that one spit —the depth of a spade blade—is sufficient.

A system of crop rotation allows the fullest use to be made of natural plant foods in the soil, but these need supplementing with nitrogen (hoof and horn meal) for leaf vegetables, phosphate (meat and bone meal or skin and bone meal) for peas and beans, and potash (sulphate of potash) for root crops.

The humus content of the soil should be kept high by the use of farmyard manures, garden compost, peat or substitutes such as spent hops and hop manure.

To prepare onion and leek beds, dig a trench to the depth of a spade blade and sprinkle manure or garden compost in it as work progresses. Later, add a top layer of bag manure —about four ounces to the square yard—walk over the bed to tread the soil firm, then rake it fine and even.

Celery, too, likes well-manured soil. Add one ounce of commercial borax to each eight yards of trench to prevent heart rot, the bane of celery growers. Care is necessary not to use more than this or the borax becomes a killer.

Carrot and parsnip seeds are sown at the top of holes made two or more feet deep with an iron crowbar, in late February or March, and filled with a prepared mixture of good gardening soil, horticultural peat and a small quantity of sand to which a little bone meal should be added. The mixture should be riddled fine and poked into the holes with a stick to ensure an even firmness.

Runner bean enthusiasts dig a trench eighteen inches wide and two feet deep during the winter. They leave the soil exposed to the frost and the weather, then fill the trench by putting in successive layers of manure or garden compost, soil, bone meal or hoof and horn meal, another layer of soil, and so on until the trench is filled. But no manure must be mixed with the top six inches of soil.

Marrows (bush, not trailing varieties are best) need plenty of moisture. Dig a hole two feet deep, two feet wide, three parts fill it with compost, manure or even old newspaper to retain moisture, and fill in the rest of the hole with soil mixed with hoof and horn meal. Plant the marrows in a saucer-shaped impression left at the top of the hole in May or June.

Brassicas—cabbages, brussels sprouts and broccoli—which stand through the winter, should be planted in a firm soil. I have planted sprouts in ground so hard that a crowbar was needed to penetrate it. They made steady growth and survived the winter well.

Sprouts need to be planted at least three feet apart, cabbages and cauliflowers two feet, parsnips nine inches, carrots six inches. Peas should be planted in rows far enough apart for the neighbouring row to be out of the shade.

These are simple rules but important ones. Without proper cultivation, show-quality vegetables are a pipe-dream. For example, carrots or parsnips planted in soil recently manured grow fork-rooted; brussels sprouts or cabbages grown in the same ground as the previous year's crop risk club root, a fungus disease which, once introduced, can lurk in the same soil for seven years.

Good cultivation is only half the battle, however. The rest depends upon careful rearing of the crops combined with careful picking for exhibition.

Onions, to be worth showing, should weigh from two to three pounds each and be perfect in shape. Seeds of a fine strain, such as Ailsa Craig, Flagon or Premier, are sown under glass in December or January; the young plants are pricked off separately, put into boxes or potted off singly and planted out in the second half of April, nine inches apart in rows at least fifteen inches apart.

It is important to keep them growing. The soil between the rows and around the plants is stirred with a Dutch hoe at least once a week. The bulbs are fed with dried blood or with one of the complete fertilizers once a fortnight—and watered, when the weather is dry, until the end of July.

Leeks, too, sown in a frame or greenhouse in January or February, should be forced along by hoeing, frequent watering and feeding after they are planted out in late April or May. Lyon or Musselburgh are the best varieties.

Exhibitors take immense pains to blanch the stems of leeks, which must be perfectly white. The stems are trained up drainpipes nine to twelve inches tall, or carefully wrapped in brown paper.

The same applies to celery, which is judged also upon the thickness and the tenderness of the stems. Celery seeds (Clayworth Prize Pink, Standard Bearer, Solid White or Defiance White) are sown under glass in the first quarter of the year and planted out in May or early June.

Runner beans are so fond of water that I leave the top one and a half inches of their trench uncovered by soil to act as a watering channel. Once a fortnight in the summer I add half an ounce of nitrate of soda to each gallon of water; and in dry spells I spray the tops of the beans with clear water to assist in the pollination and setting of the flowers.

The seeds (I recommend Streamline or Prizewinner) are sown singly in April and planted out in early June. For later use the beans can be sown in the open ground—but not before the middle of May.

WHEN growing peas (Alderman, Giant Stride or Duke of Albany) give them similar treatment to beans. Handling the pods when picking them risks ruining the natural bloom. Exhibition peas should be cut from the vines with scissors, handled by the stalk and put in cotton-wool with the best side of the pod upwards.

Care must also be taken in the lifting of carrots and parsnips. Judges seem to prefer long-rooted carrots to the stump-rooted variety, but unless a trench is dug at least two feet deep round each carrot the prize root risks mutilation when it is lifted.

In my view the best varieties are: carrots—Scarlet Intermediate, Altrincham, St. Valery; parsnips—The Student and Hollow Crown Selected.

The seedlings are allowed to grow in groups of three or four until they form two pairs of leaves each. Then all except the strongest in each group of seedlings are destroyed.

Here again, the best possible summer cultivation advice is: use plenty of hoe. Vegetables love it. THE END

Phantom princess

Continued from page 22

laying up outside the reserve. When the Mounties come, I lied to them, kept them batting around on the lower river for a week.

"They never did find August. They beat this whole country for him and didn't find a trace. Three times they went in after him, with dogs and trackers. The last trip, they even fetched a Babine Indian, s'posed to be the best tracker they had.

"Well, Doc, they found their Babine in a canyon, what was left of him. His head was gone. Wolves, they said."

My temples throbbed, and the wind wailed above us. At the edge of the firelight, the ghost-grizzly's monstrous pelt flapped and strained against its lashings while Saul's voice ran on.

"But me, I felt, somehow, August was still alive. He was catty in the woods. I never saw a man so able to take care of himself.

"I didn't dare sashay in by my lone. Old Inspector Carveth-Wells is real smart. He'd guess right away what was in my mind, and the Mounties would trail me.

"Then, last fall, I got my chance with a party of sports who wanted a guide. I fetched them in. We run up a camp right here, right where we are now. But they wasn't hunters. They'd packed more liquor than grub, and they got drunk and they stayed drunk. The second night, I rolled them into their sacks, all three out cold.

"Long about midnight, I looked up and it was like a ghost stood across the fire, grinning at me. Except it was no ghost, Doc. It was my brother August. He was tricked out mighty queer, in a leather skirt with a goat-hair blanket slung across his shoulder. He wore that hat my scarebear's wearing now. The big sword was in his belt, and the little black knife stuck out of his legging."

In the flame glow, Saul Prince's eyes shone black and depthless. I leaned on his sleeping-bag, alternately burning and freezing. Saul's voice reaching me as if across a widening distance.

"I said to him: 'Where the devil you been, August?' just as if we were kids on the reserve again.

"He flashed those gold teeth, and he said: 'Wit' de Old People, Saul.' He'd never done well in school like me. He talked rough always, and sort of ignorant. 'I'm de top man among dem. Took all my rifle shells to do it, but by de holy, I'm boss now.'

"He showed his teeth again, and the look on his face turned me cold, because I knew where August had gone, and who he'd make himself chief of."

THE wind wailed strange music, skirling overhead. I licked my dry lips, and Saul poured the last of some bitter black tea into my tin mug. He added aspirins from our first-aid kit.

He said softly: "I begged August to come back with me and give himself up. Told him it'd be manslaughter, not murder, and he'd be out of the pen in ten years, five with luck.

"But August just laughed at me. 'I ain't goin' back,' he told me. 'Not ever. You come along wit' me, Saul boy. I'll get you a woman de pretties' you ever did see. I'll show you places where you can sink your arm to de elbow in nuggets an' flydust.' Then he said, and his voice froze me clear to my bones: 'Why, hell now, we don' even need waste cartridges on dese white fellas. Let me whack off dere heads, Saul. We'll take de rifles, take de shells. We'll be chiefs togedder, kid. Guard each de odder's back, live it up like a couple of kings.'

"'What about your wife?' I asked him. I was holding my gun like I am now. August never took his eyes off it for more than a second. He looked at it like it was food and him a man starving. 'What about Mary?' I said, and he laughed again, except it was more like a snarl.

"He told me: 'Hell wit' Mary! I got better'n her for myself, back yonder. So will you have, if you come wit' me.'

"Right then, Doc, I heard the music. Like the wind blowing through a witch-broom tree, it sounded. Made me want to laugh, and cry, and fight. I could feel the hair start to crawl on my head, because even without August telling me, I knew it was Mukhalin music, and that the Mukhalin were out there, moving in on us.

"August heard it, too. He glared at me with his face all fierce and wild, and he said: 'De rifles, Saul! One rifle, for de Lord's sake! My shells is gone, my gun is bust, I can't bluff dem any more. Saul, I got to have a rifle.'"

Saul Prince passed a hand through his hair in a vague, distracted gesture. "Doc, there was a time I loved my brother. But I thought of Mary back at tidewater, picking and scratching as best she could for her and her baby, too proud to let me help her.

"Right then I hated August, hated my brother enough to shoot him where he stood. He eased closer to me, with his hand sliding into that basket around the sword handle. I worked the bolt and threw a shell into the chamber.

"'Get out, August,' I told him. 'Don't never you show your face to me again. You're no brother of mine any more. Go back to your Mukhalin, damn you!'

"He looked at me, steady and sorrowful. Then he cast his Mukhalin hat down by the fire. 'If you ever come back, Saul,' he told me, 'put de hat on a scarebear for a sign. If I'm alive, I'll show up.'

"August turned and headed out, slowly, still looking back at me. Doc, I don't know what I saw, past him in the meadow. Shadows that could have been men, big men. Wolves that might have been dogs, or dogs like wolves. One shadow that moved to and fro, with a bundle in its arms and the hellfire music screeching out of it fit to drive a man crazy.

"Then the shadows were gone and the music moved away, farther and farther, till you couldn't tell was it music or only the wind. I found the black knife next morning in the heather."

Saul Prince rocked up from his heels, and an oddly gentle smile softened his face.

"Something else I've got to tell you, Doc. I had to find out about August: did he live or was he dead? On account of Mary and me, I had to. That's why I guided you in. I started for the east pass this morning. The Mukhalin dogs, the pack that ran the bear, near got me, I lost my nerve. But I'm going to stick with you. The best I can, I'll look out for you."

There was still one thing to be told. Even with delirium closing on me, I strained after it.

"What are they, Saul," I whispered. "Who are the Mukhalin?"

For answer, under the shrieking and wailing on the wind, the demented skirling, I heard the precise click of the rifle bolt as Saul Prince slid a shell into the breach. The last sound to register on my ears that night was the pibroch, debased and demonaic. The last sight was Saul Prince, a brave man and a good one, planted between me and the dreadful night with his rifle cocked in his hands. . . .

Sometime before daylight the fever left me. When I stirred, it was full morning. The blizzard had howled itself to death, and I looked out with rational eyes to a crisp white world. Saul Prince huddled by the ashes of our fire, chin on chest. I called to him, and he sighed, and lifted his head.

"Saul," I said. "Out yonder. . . ."

He answered me wearily. "I don't see nothing, Doc."

Wordless, I pointed to the scarebear at the edge of the meadow, nearly buried now, the tam-o'-shanter grotesque under a topping of snow. The night had passed, the dazzling white of the meadow lay untrampled, but some shadow of nightmare lingered.

I groped for my binoculars, still slung around my neck, and focused them on the scarebear. The bleached skull under the tam-o'-shanter leaped at me with its gold-toothed grin.

We broke camp that morning. My guide sledded me out of the valley on the ghost-bear's hide. At the end of a week which I dislike to recall, I was in Vancouver Hospital.

Who, what, are the Mukhalin? The question continued to haunt me. Did they truly exist, or were they no more than figments of a mind bemused by cranial fracture? The archives of the Province of British Columbia yielded no clue, although I spent a week delving into forgotten records.

I have approached the enigma from every angle in the months since, and my correspondence has threatened to overflow my files. It is only this past week I venture to feel I have at last stumbled on the fantastic answer.

I quote from the photographic copy of a letter dated May 9, 1891, addressed to the then secretary of a mission society with headquarters in Edinburgh, whose present successor insists on anonymity for himself and his worthy group. The letter, written in a copperplate hand, bears the signature of a Reverend Ezekial Ramsbotham, an Englishman and an Episcopalian.

"Word received this day by messenger from Tzwahalis Village," wrote the Rev. Mr. Ramsbotham, "puts me to the painful necessity of informing you that my fears for your society's toiler in this vineyard have, alas, been more than justified. As you doubtless are aware, the loss of his wife, following hard on the tragic demise by smallpox of his two infant daughters, has weighed grievously upon him.

"It is now, sir, my distressful duty to notify you that on the morning of May Third, in company with certain of the wilder and more rascally spirits of both sexes from the Tzwahalis encampment and the Hudson's Bay Company factory adjoining, your representative quitted his mission. I was credibly informed that when last seen he was attired in the barbarous costume which he has affected since the loss of his wife, trappings inherited as I understand from a Highland Scots grandfather.

"He had installed himself in the stern of a war canoe and was playing in a veritable frenzy upon his bagpipes. His crew, who had obtained rum as these children of nature are all too easily able to do, howled an accompaniment to his music, if such it may be termed. On the riverbank, meanwhile, the remaining natives wrung their hands in grief, crying in the rude trade jargon of this coast: *'Mukhalin klatawa! Mukhalin Tyee neskia klatawa!'* which interpreted signifies, 'Maclean departs! Chief Maclean goes from us!'

"The Colonel of Royal Engineers situate at New Westminster has promised an investigative expedition. But it is my sad conviction, sir, that the Rev. Angus Maclean will leave his bones to whiten in the wilderness."

I need only remark further that on receipt of this letter, I requested long leave. Saul Prince, now happily married to his brother's widow, has declined to accompany me to the forbidden valley of the Mukhalin. He has, in fact, warned me very strongly against returning.

But return I must, as a man of science and because of other less tangible compulsions. I think almost constantly of the red-haired woman in white doeskin whom I saw, or dreamed I saw. Her lovely face comes to me more plainly than the faces around me. My heart tells me she is real, that she exists remote from our so-called civilization, a blue-eyed princess of the wild Macleans. THE END

MY BROTHER Jack

WHEN we were young, we lived in the suburbs of Bradford. I am a few years younger than Jack and I saw little of him as a child, as he was not fond of playing with girls. During the winter holidays he stayed out all day playing football with his school friends.

They would even have a staggered lunch-time when each boy would take it in turn to go home so that the game would not be broken up. Jack, who was the most enthusiastic player of all, ran home, ate an enormous meal very rapidly and then rushed back to the football pitch.

Nowadays Jack is regarded as bit of a sceptic, but when he was a child his leg could be pulled very easily. A kind neighbour, whom my brother liked enormously, used to make up stories about a little man who lived on the other side of the town, and who gave away bicycles on a particular spot at a particular time.

Jack was determined not to let such a chance slip by. He played truant from school and made the long journey to where the mythical man was supposed to give away his presents. He waited for more than three hours, even forgoing his usual large tea, until he eventually gave up and returned home to a worried mother who had been anxiously searching for him. He tried to hide his disappointment from her but could not conceal his dislike of the neighbour who had told the story.

A few years later, he had his first article accepted by a magazine and received his first payment of a guinea. He earned his second guinea that year by doing a comedy turn in a small concert party.

Having seen an advertisement in the local paper, he went for an audition. He was very puzzled when the person conducting the auditions paid much more attention to reading the bumps on his head than listening to his act. The bumps must have been interesting, however, because he was engaged. He had to sing a couple of songs, but was so nervous that he forgot the words, and confessed to me when he had finished that perhaps, after all, a comic's life was not for him.

At that time he adopted a very bohemian style of dress—baggy trousers and large, flowing ties which, of course, astonished all our neighbours. His behaviour often caused them to say to Mother: "What ever is going to become of your Jack?"

WHO IS THIS FAMOUS BROTHER? See page 26

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Killers of the reef

Continued from page 9

for a moment. "I don't suppose you'd be a buyer, Mr. Legrand? A trading store doing no business and a lugger—well, you've seen her."

Johnny smiled wryly. "I can't help. I couldn't buy a square meal. I'm in the same boat as yourself—on my way to Samarai to sell out. Washed up. No shell. It's the same story."

"I'm sorry," she said. "You look like a young man who should do well."

"I'm not complaining," Johnny said. "There's the world spread out ahead."

He hesitated for a moment. Then he said: "I've got a proposition for you, Mrs. Collings. I'll take your dinghies and mine, and we'll both fish for trochus from Calypso Girl. We'll give it a week or two and see how we go. Neither of us has anything to lose."

"What can you gain, Mr. Legrand? You can fish without my boys."

"Local knowledge," Johnny said. "Your boys know the reefs; they'll save me time. And I'll ask credit for food. I'm all but out of rice."

"But what about the sharks?"

"They've had a spell," he said easily. "We'll leave the sharks to the luck of the game. If there's any threat of them, we'll give it up. Is it a bargain?"

"It's a bargain," she said.

The girl was coming up the path among the flowers, and in a moment more her grandmother was introducing them and announcing the new diving

FREEDOM—1

The path of freedom is blocked much more by those who wish to obey than by those who desire to command.

M. D. Petre

partnership. Martie stood, cool and distant.

"You seem to have changed your plans," she told Johnny vindictively.

Johnny said: "You'd better arrange for one boss-boy to come aboard Calypso Girl to keep a check on the shell. We can keep each consignment separate that way."

"Willing can do it," said the old lady.

"No, Willing's a good diver. I'll go aboard myself," the girl said. "That's if you go ahead with it. Did my grandmother tell you about the sharks?"

"There was something funny about those sharks," Mrs. Collings said. "All the years we've been here they never appeared. Not until. . . ."

"Morrow and the sharks came together," the girl observed. "We never get our troubles singly on Palamasea."

"We'll meet them when they arrive," Johnny said. "We'll make a start in the morning. . . ."

The reefs lay away from the bay, a distance of two hours' steaming. The sun was high in the sky before Calypso Girl dropped her anchor and dispersed the dinghies—Johnny's two, and two from Queen Emma.

One by one the men in the dinghies dropped quietly over the side, leaving just one at the oars of each boat. Johnny, too, dived in as soon as Calypso lay snug at her anchor, and he swam down to the bottom.

Through the lenses of his goggles the underwater world spread away, planted irregularly with corals and weeds. Almost immediately he saw the small conical Turk's hat of a trochus, and he picked it up. Five or six yards farther on were two together. The reef was fabulously rich, a natural home of trochus. He trod water at the edge of the boat and threw the shells, one at a time, on the deck. Martie, hands on her hips, stood watching him.

"How's that?" he called, triumphant. "Five hundred pounds a ton and just look at it!"

He swam to the chains and climbed over the bows. "It looks like the jackpot," he said, grinning.

"Don't count your shell before it's cashed," Martie said. "I'll believe it when the cheque comes in."

When the dinghies came in and delivered their loads towards evening there were two respectable piles of the conical shells, and the air was cheerful as the crew-boys put them in order.

By the end of the third day, Johnny estimated that they had brought up a clear half ton of shell. On several occasions four or five of the boys had reported single sharks—presumably the same sharks—cruising slowly down the reef, and twice Johnny saw them. He stayed motionless beneath the water, and they displayed no curiosity.

After one of these encounters, Martie went down. He protested, but she shrugged off the idea of danger.

"No shark's going to hurt you if you stop still," she said. "It's the people who panic who get taken. If the shark thinks you're struggling, he'll bite. Not otherwise."

"I know that," he said shortly.

He watched her beautiful body in a corn-yellow swimsuit split the surface and go down. He was falling in love with Martie, he thought—glumly, because Martie was as cold and distant as it was possible for a girl to be. Her grandmother, on the other hand, was happy as a lark at the prospect of heavy catches of shell and a continuing life upon the island.

That evening, Johnny was supervising the unloading of the shell when Morrow came walking along the jetty. He walked round the sacks of shell and picked up a couple of samples.

"Nice shell. You're doing pretty well, young fellow," he said suddenly.

"Tolerable," Johnny agreed.

"Using old lady Collings's diving boys, eh? Don't you think you'd do better on your own?"

"I think I'm doing all right," maintained Johnny.

Morrow shook his head. "Watch out for that kind of partnership, son. It isn't healthy."

"Thanks for the warning," Johnny said. "But we'll stay partners."

"You'll do no good on Palamasea while you run with the old lady," Morrow said. "She'll be pulling out soon and the island will be better off."

"Better for you, you mean," Johnny suggested.

"There isn't room for the two of us," Morrow said, and walked off.

In the morning, Morrow's cabin-cruiser came out and lay rocking on the swell, inshore from Calypso Girl. Johnny watched her for a while, then went to slip over the side. He was suspicious of the cruiser, but he couldn't see what harm Morrow could do.

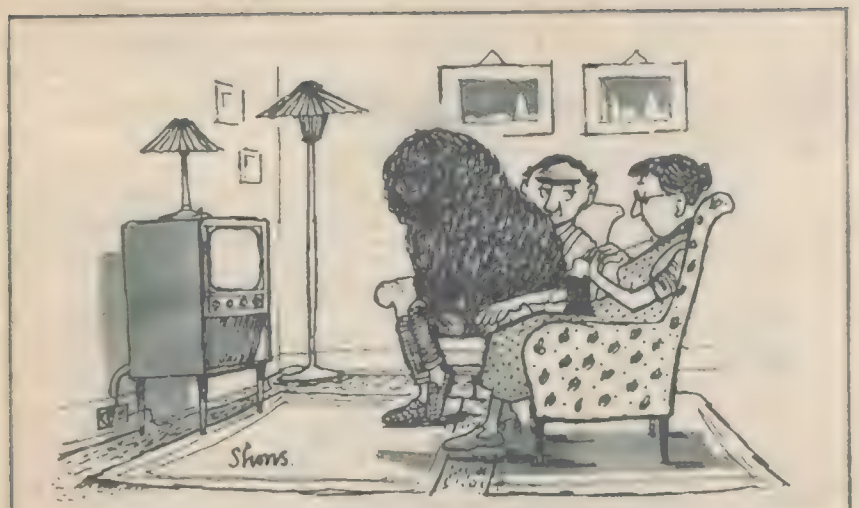
He turned and dived down into the water. He was perplexed about Morrow, and probably his perceptions were dulled, or he would have been aware of a new factor as soon as the sea closed over him. It was a sound, something like that of the spat of the pearl oyster as it propels itself through the water, but enormously hastened and sharpened and magnified. He became conscious of it slowly, and took no notice.

He went on down, past Willing. Willing was coming up, his knees drawn up to his chin, his hands folded across them. There would be only one

MY BROTHER JACK

See page 24

J. B. Priestley, the author, is the famous brother of Mrs. Paul Scott



"After all, dear, you are in his chair"

reason for that—sharks—and as he reached the bottom Johnny saw them. Not a few; but an army of grey shapes.

Johnny, aware, nervous, headed towards them, swimming hardly at all, holding his place. His empty lungs normally never worried him; now he was aware of their limitation, not yet approached, but soon to run out.

Gently, delicately, he swam. On the surface he could breathe. On the surface, too, he would become more vulnerable. He came to the top at the end of his endurance, twenty yards or so from the boat, and he lay there a moment resting, the gentle tide widening the distance between him and his Calypso Girl. From the corner of his eye he saw Morrow's cruiser, still close, circling his vessel and himself in a wide, slow arc. He breathed deeply two or three times and, sinking below the water, swam for the schooner.

And again came the sharks—small sharks of five feet, several twice the length; and then the monster. Johnny stopped swimming, and waited in a growing panic till the big fellow passed, then rose to the surface again. He was safe while he stayed still and completely immersed.

CALYPSO GIRL was only perhaps ten yards off now. He filled his lungs and thrust his head beneath the water, searching. He glimpsed the monster, turning again, preparing to attack. . . .

Johnny panicked. He spun for the ship, flailing his arms. In a flash of consciousness he saw Martie on the deck, swinging a boat-hook. People were shouting to him, but he couldn't hear. Then the boat-hook crashed against his head, and time stopped. . . .

He came to, lying on the deck, and Martie's arms were round him, and she was saying something, half weeping.

"Oh, darling, darling! I had to do it."

He looked up and smiled. His head was bursting with pain, but he smiled; and the voice stopped instantly.

"Say that again." He sat up. The swimsuit was red with blood where his head had rested.

"You panicked," she said. "You wouldn't stop still. I had to hit you. It was the only way to stop you."

"I thought you were aiming to hit the shark," he said.

"What was the use? Besides, he'd have reached you first. After I stopped you, he swam off for another look."

He had to admit she'd done the right thing. A still man in the water would be treated with suspicion, investigated thoroughly. A struggling man was a mouthful, to be seized quickly.

He held his head on one side. "Feels sore," he commented. "I want to hear what you were saying when I woke."

"I wasn't thinking," she said. For the first time since he had met her she blushed. She turned away.

"I guess that's the end of the trochus, though," Johnny said.

But Harmony was waiting to say something. "This other captain," he said. "This captain in the boat without sails. I think more better you and me we go see him."

Johnny looked at the cabin-cruiser. It was on the run, heading back to harbour. He said: "I'll see him later."

"No, Captain." Harmony insisted. "More better now. Quick now. And follow his wake."

The engine, on Harmony's order, was already running. They raced in after the cruiser. Harmony stood in the bows, scanning the water closely. After half a mile he gave a shout, ran back for the boathook and hooked some floating debris from the water.

He brought the object forward. It was a looped can threading a number of wooden, perforated plates. Johnny took it in his hands. The plates, he saw, were sections of the inner shells of coconuts, flint-hard, and loosely threaded so they danced and rattled when the whole thing was shaken.

"You see him before, Captain?" asked Harmony.

"No," Johnny said. "What is it?"

"To call the sharks, Captain. You shake him, this way, that way, under the water, then the sharks come. All the sharks, Captain. Suppose shark is half a mile away, he'll come."

Suddenly Johnny realized the significance of the little loop of discs. He looked at Martie. "The three boys you lost," he said. "Was Morrow here?"

She nodded. "What are you going to do?" she asked.

"I'm not sure, yet," he said. . . .

The cabin-cruiser was on her moorings when they swept into the bay, and Calypso Girl tied up to her. Morrow came on deck. He looked at Johnny, sitting on the rail, swinging the shark call, rattling it, and his face was grey.

"You know what this is?" Johnny asked.

"Never saw it in my life before."

"It's yours. It came off your ship," insisted Johnny.

"You can't prove anything."

"I can prove if it works," Johnny told him. "Tonight, at dusk, I'll prove it. I'm going to make a whole bunch of these things and prove whether, say, a man could swim with them—with one tied to each wrist and one to each ankle. That should prove something."

Morrow looked at him, said nothing.

"Think it over," Johnny said. "If it doesn't work that way, I'll find out how it does. In the meantime, think about it. I've been doing some thinking myself. I've been thinking what you said: that the island isn't big enough for us all. I know what I'm up against now, and, Morrow, I can handle it." He rattled the shark call. "Don't forget. Tonight we'll get together, and do some proving. Assuming you're still on the island."

He turned and went below, and Calypso Girl moved off to her moorings.

In the cabin Martie stared at him with a queer look in her eyes. "You get the darnedest ideas," she said.

"I've got another right now," he said. "A better one."

She smiled. "If it's business," she said, "you'll have to speak to my grandmother."

"It's this kind of business," he said, and he took her in his arms. . . .

It took them a long time to disembark, and when they did, a long file of Morrow's boys was carrying gear aboard his cruiser. They were singing as they worked. THE END

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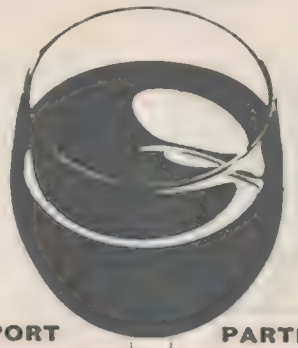

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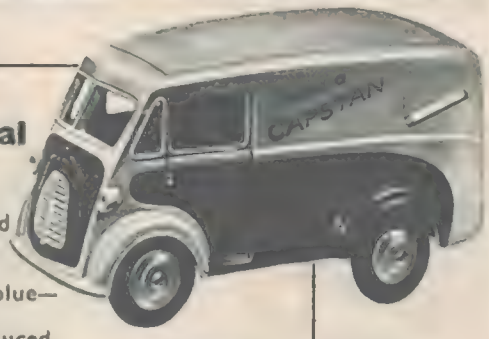

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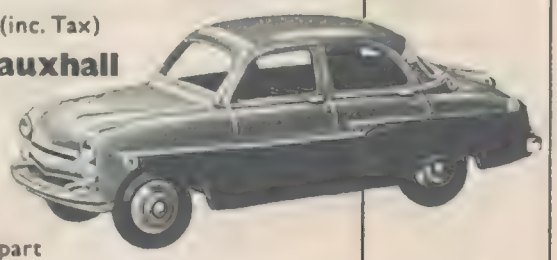

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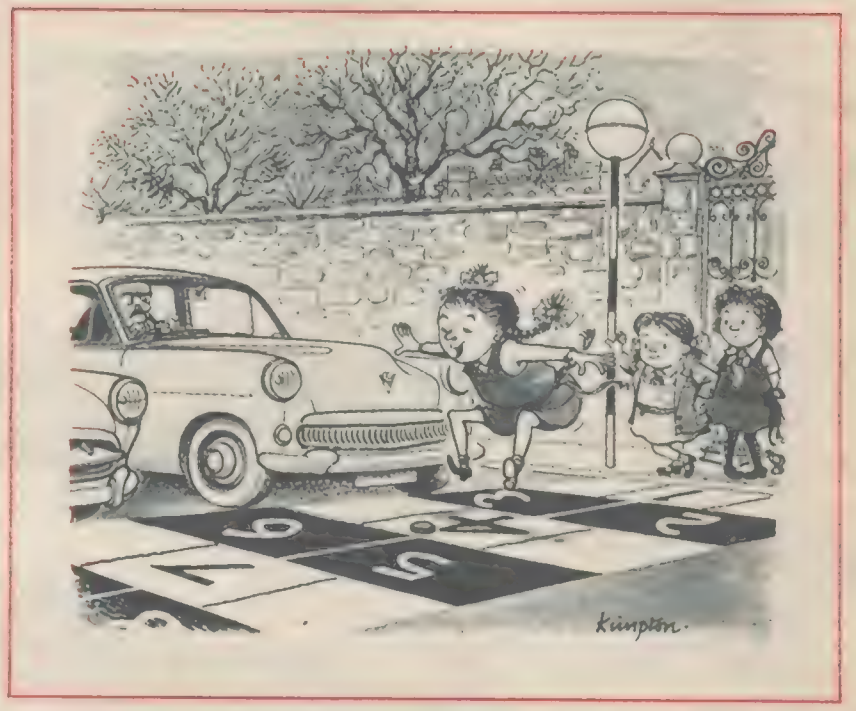

The feckless chap

Continued from page 17

her and gave her a sense of tenderness at the same time.

At the end of two months he had to leave Plumgarth. There was not enough work for an extra hired man.

Back at Hazelrigg, Mary's comment was practical. "Then you'll have to find something else. These days there's no excuse to be out of work."

Tim stared uneasily at the stone flags. "D'you reckon I'm feckless?"

"You are a bit. I've heard a deal about you from folks in the dale. You're cheerful, and decent enough. But at twenty-five you should be getting somewhere."

"'Tis the way I'm made, I reckon." Tim blinked. "Mary, don't be hard on me. A chap's what he is. How can he help himself?"

For the first time he discovered that her voice could have an edge. She said: "Don't talk that rubbish. For years you seem to have had the idea that you were different from other folks and needn't keep your nose to the grindstone. Suppose the rest of us took that attitude?"

"Oo, aye, I know, but——"

"There's no but about it. The fact is, it's selfish."

Tim turned white.

Mary nodded. "Selfish. You were satisfied to scrape along. That's not good enough." Her smile took some of the sting out of her words. "I'm saying this for your sake. Now go away, and don't come back here till you've found another full-time job."

He got up like a boy who had been slapped painfully in the face. "I'm gey sorry," he mumbled, and went.

In puzzled dejection Tim walked along to George Derwent's farm. George was the chap to give advice: he understood lasses.

George thought for a while after Tim had told his story, and then gave his judgment. "Reckon a town's the spot for you. You're clever with them hands of yours. There's plenty o' engineering jobs goin' in places like Lancaster."

Tim trudged home in a sombre mood. Selfish, she had called him. That hurt worse than anything.

In the pearl and grey loom of dawn he set off for the station eleven miles away on the coast, and caught a train to Lancaster. The following evening he presented himself at Hazelrigg.

"I've fixed up with a firm in Lancaster," Tim announced. "Start on Monday. They make agricultural machinery."

Mary's lips pursed in surprise. She said gently: "Tim, you'll miss the dale. I know you will, dreadfully. But it might be the making of you."

He shrugged his shoulders, shuffled his feet. He was feeling very nervous. He said: "Seeing I'll be away a long time, Mary, could you sort of . . . ?"

She knew what he meant. Her voice was soft with pity; she said: "No, Tim, I couldn't. I'm very fond of you. But I'm not in love with you. Not quite. I'd have to respect a man. There's something very sweet and attractive about you, but. . . ."

To him, the silence between them seemed terribly final. He almost whispered the question he had been dreading to ask.

"Is there another chap?"

"No."

He said hoarsely: "If you take up with another chap while I'm down there, will you let me know? Then I'll never come back."

Mary laughed again. "Yes, I'll tell you. But don't be so dismal. You'll soon forget the dale and me."

"Forget you? Why, I couldn't." Tim looked at her pleadingly. "You don't want me to?"

"Well, no. But you work hard and do well for yourself. . . ."

He lasted out at Lancaster for eight months. It was April when he arrived back in the dale. Within an hour he was at Hazelrigg.

Mary stopped abruptly when she saw him, shocked by the pallor of his skin, the tiredness of his eyes, the prominence of his cheek-bones. "Tim! Have you been ill?"

"Aye. Doctor said——" He gulped. "Doctor said I wasn't cut out for that life. If I went on with it, he said, I'd be jiggered pretty soon. I'd been doin' fairly well, too." He braced himself to tell the truth. "So I've left."

Mary sighed and said: "I expect the doctor was right. You're a ghost. Come in and have a cup of tea. I'm not blaming you, Tim," she added, "but what's going to happen next?"

He sat down at the kitchen table and they talked a while. Then something nuzzled his ankle. It was a fox-terrier about a year old.

Mary said: "It's Spot. Belongs to my married sister Alice. She's stopping with us a while while her husband's away."

She went on: "It's an amusing little thing, but gey feckless. Daren't let it out alone, or it 'ud chase sheep, or lose itself. Alice dotes on it. But I wish she wouldn't leave it in my charge. 'Tis a real worry to me."

Tim scratched the terrier's ear, and conjured up some sort of conversation. But Mary gave him no great encouragement. It had been foolish of him to picture her giving him an adoring welcome. . . . Things were where they had been eight months ago. He knew he ought never to have set foot in the dale again. He was only torturing himself.

Yet, the next morning, with the south-west breeze tasting of spring, he couldn't help feeling cheerful. He went up the trod threading the Hazelrigg intakes.

There were gaps in those intake walls. The long frost had raised the ground and now, with the thaw setting

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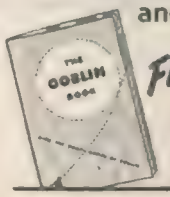

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in, the soil was sinking. In places the top stones of the walls had collapsed.

He wandered on and out through the gate of the last intake, where the dry-stone wall was unusually high—at least eight feet. That had been because the men clearing the intake itself of a vast number of boulders had had to put them somewhere, and had built them into the wall.

A lot of rough chunks of granite were strewn about the base of it. They must have fallen in the last day or so. And standing on a steep gradient as it was, that great wall would be liable to more gaps as the ground thawed out.

Then Tim heard a yapping and a blaring. Scuttling through the dead brackens came a ewe heavy in lamb, followed by Spot, the terrier.

Tim made a grab at Spot. The terrier swerved, dodged playfully and dived through a hogg-hole in the intake wall, a narrow gap formed by two boulders spaced apart at ground level and crowned by a massive slab supporting the weight of the wall above. The split chunks of another slab, propped there long since to serve as a cover, had fallen down inside the hole and made it smaller.

Tim went on his knees, peered through and saw the terrier scampering towards the far, right-hand corner of the intake. There, the only outlet was a grike, a V-shaped opening in the top of the wall. That would defeat it.

Tim's mind worked quickly and deliberately. If the terrier turned back and bolted for the gate, it would be there before he could reach it. His one chance was to wriggle through the hogg-hole and head it off. Remembering the thaw and the loosening stones, he realized it would be risky. But thinking of Mary, likely worrying anxiously about the escaped dog, he flattened himself, and got his head and shoulders through the hole.

It was a tightish fit. Granite was touching his hips. He gave a forward jerk. The next split second held a sound that chilled him with dread. There came a faint clinking behind him. Something small and hard dropped on the base of his spine. At the same time the wall shuddered, and enormous weight squeezed against his ribs. Then the pressure checked, the stones descending no lower.

Tim could tell what had happened. The small flake on his spine had been fitted in under the big slab to make it a level crown over the hogg-hole. The frost had loosened it and his jerking had done the rest. Now one side of the slab was a couple of inches lower, hard against the boulder underneath, and he was held as surely as a rat in a trap.

He contracted his muscles, dug his fingers into the ground, and strained to pull himself free. Even while he made the effort, he realized the danger of it. The slab was taking the weight of the whole wall above, at least a ton of boulders and stones, now out of true. If by some miracle he lifted it half an inch, the balance would be further threatened, likely to bring an avalanche of granite crashing down on him.

He began to shout. He might be heard at Hazelrigg, though the breeze was towards him. The odds were against anybody else picking up his yelling. The next nearest farm lay a mile farther up the dale.

He bawled until his throat ached. Then, while he sprawled there giving a rest to his throbbing lungs, there came from the top of the wall such a scraping as might be caused by a rat among rafters.

His hands jerked up, covering his head and the back of his neck. A rough stone fell, thumping into the ground. Before it had rolled to rest, a second dropped and bounced on the face of the wall. A corner of it smashed the tip of his little finger where it was guarding his left ear. The weight of the blow drove his face against the ground. The pain of the crushed finger gave him moments of swirling sickness.

He gritted his teeth, swore in order to bolster up his courage, and shouted with the shrillness of near-panic.

Presently there was the hollow drumming of running feet. Mary's head and shoulders appeared framed between the grike in the far wall.

"Keep away, lass," Tim shouted to her. "Nay, not so near. Wall might give any time."

Mary saw the cramped flatness of his back. She came on.

"Nay, keep your distance," Tim yelled frantically. "If wall gives, you'll be killed. Aye, I'm pinned."

"Tim! I——"

"Now, listen. There's nowt you can do alone, my dear. Get help. Two or three chaps. They'll need to bring summat to stand on. They'll have to clear the wall from the top."

She said in a voice close to a sob: "There's nobody near. It'll be an hour, likely longer, before——"

"Can't be helped."

"Oh, Tim, that wall might——"

"Aye, it might. Don't try to help me, lass. I'd never forgive myself if you got hurt. Go for help."

Mary turned and ran at top speed.

It was an hour before she arrived back with two farmers and a shepherd. They had brought boxes to stand on. Very carefully they started taking down the upper courses of the wall.

At last they were clear down to the slab. While they heaved at the sides of it, Tim wriggled free and got up.

"Yon hand's bad," said one of the farmers. "Best have doctor. I'll phone him from the Fox."

Mary said: "Tell him to come to Hazelrigg. . . ."

Mary led Tim into the kitchen. He sat down and smiled wearily. He said: "Reckon I've been a fair bother."

She said in a strange muffled way: "Why did you use that hogg-hole?"

He pointed at the terrier asleep in front of the range. "Yon was loose. 'Twas like this . . ." and Tim explained.

Mary's mouth began to tremble. "And once I called you selfish. Just for me you did that, and never thinking of yourself, you kept me away from that wall."

He said: "Nay, Mary, 'twas only what a chap would do when he loves a lass. But I'm no great shakes, really. 'Tis the way I'm made."

Mary leaned over him and stroked his hair. "I love the way you're made," she said softly. THE END

LEAVES FROM Starke's HOLIDAY GUIDE BOOK

"The more discriminating of travellers will discover much that has remained unblemished by civilization"

Far, far the mountain peak

Continued from page 13

now and the expedition, and he has already been promised the Parliamentary Under-Secretaryship for India by 1914, and a Presidency a few years later, depending on who retires and who succeeds Lord Hardinge at Calcutta. . . .

December 23, 1911.

Dear Daddy Darling.

I don't know what to say. I sent off a cablegram as soon as I got yours yesterday, and I will try and write some more soon. Everything seemed to happen so suddenly but I suppose, it being what it was, that you must have known some time ago and didn't tell me because of Peter's being away and then he and Gerry having fever. They are both well now.

Oh Daddy, I'm going to have a baby. I would have waited to let you know till a little later—she isn't due till July—but now I want you to know. Put some primroses on Mally's grave for me as soon as they are out. . . .

July 22, 1912.

Dearest Daddy,

Did you get Peter's cablegram? In case you didn't, it was a boy after all, just as Peter said it would be, and we're going to call him Rodney* after his great-grandfather, the old general. . . .

May 9, 1913.

Dearest Daddy,

Just a hurried line as the expedition has reached Bombay and telegrams are flying back and forth about lost kit and stuff being held up in customs. *The Times* has sole rights to the story, and Peter's been writing a long article describing the preparations. . . .

We are so much looking forward to seeing Gerry again. He has been doing splendidly in the Lords, from what we read. But I hope he has been able to keep fit, too.

Rodney is screaming his head off and I must see that ayah makes his bottle right. I caught her one day putting a little gin into it when he had been very fretful with his teeth.

All my love,

Emily. . . .

But, when she laid down the pen and sealed up the envelope, she did not go and supervise the making of Rodney's bottle. Instead, she sat quietly, thinking how little, in all her letters, she had told the truth of her marriage. This failure, which she felt amounted almost to concealment, was yet not deliberate. Only, how can you tell even parents whom you love about the inwardness of marriage?

Mally would have been able to read more between the lines, but when she died there was only Daddy, and to him you had to speak directly—and that she could not do. She had wanted to make them understand that her marriage was going as she expected, for she had known very well that Peter Savage could be no ordinary husband. But there was no way of telling them, or anyone, without making them think the opposite.

There had been chilly, almost silent battles with Peter—about Gerry, Rodney, the housekeeper, a hundred things. She never won, in the sense that he gave in to her; but often, after she had been roused to the same high pitch of intensity that was normal with him, she had made him see that she was right, and then he had agreed with her and done what she wanted him to. He never held these "victories" against her, as she knew many husbands did; and, best of all, he never said that something was not her business.

That was good; and the sense of climbing was good, for there could be no doubt that he was brilliant as well as ferociously determined. If he merely sat back and took what was coming to him, the Service would soon waft him to its highest pinnacles. But of course he would not do that. That would be the easy way, and he would take the difficult, the impossible. Because no Indian Civil Service man had been Viceroy of India since John Lawrence in 1864, therefore Peter would be Viceroy.

She knew now that that had become his intention. He had even decided when it should happen: in succession to Gerry, probably about 1930. 1930! Seventeen years ahead! The good Lord alone knew what might have happened in India by then—but Peter intended to meet the destiny of India at that point, and from there on take it into his strong hands, with Gerry, by then translated to the India Office, guarding his back against the politicians at home.

There was excitement in the vistas he described to her. When they were alone in the bungalow late at night, and the work done, he would talk; better still, in the big tent on the cold-weather tours, with the flap raised and the stars flaming over the remote snows. All the Presidency governors were going to be Indians, instead of lords from home. Each province would govern itself according to the customs of its people. The Himalayan torrents would be harnessed to give the country electric power. He would re-create the Indian middle class, and give its members training, work and responsibility. He . . . he. . . . All these and a thousand other seeds lay in his mind, ready to flower.

Only—he would break a hundred men before he reached his horizons, and she could not think the price worth paying. She thought that, if she could

* He became Colonel Rodney Savage, the hero of John Masters's novel *Bhowani Junction*, serialized in JOHN BULL in April 1954

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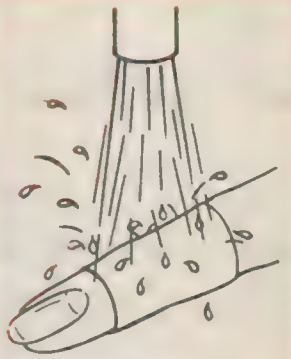

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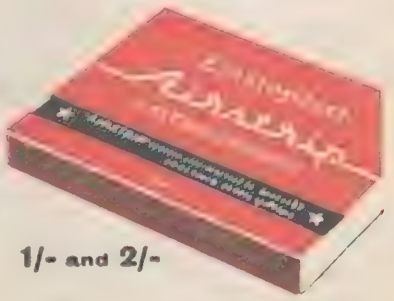

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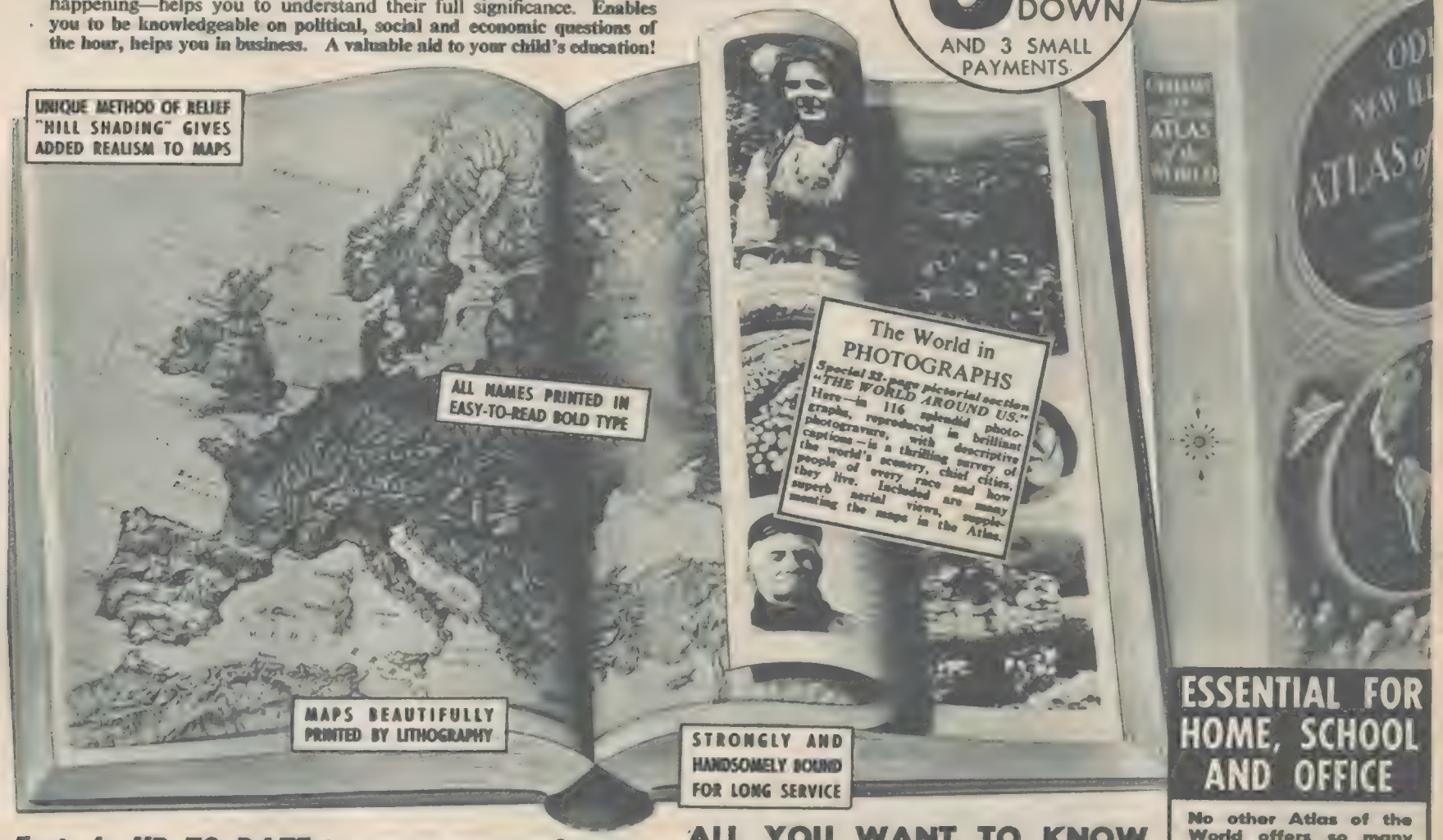
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make him see only that, she would have fulfilled the purpose of her life far more than in giving birth to Rodney, or even being her husband's wife and lover.

Soon Gerry would be here again, and he and Peter would go off on that other journey of mountaineering, where she could not be a partner because she was a woman. But, she thought, it would be wonderful to have Gerry close even for a few days; wonderful and nerve-racking.

She had spent the best part of twenty years seeing Gerry as a husband and lover, and he had never been in focus. Then Peter gave the lens one fierce twist, in that moment of searing discovery under the loom of the Matterhorn, and showed her the real truth.

Gerry was her younger brother, even her son. She wanted to look after him and, when she saw him going about with Peter, it was about Gerry's safety that she thought.

And Harry Walsh would be here. It was a pity that Peggy had not been able to come. Next time, perhaps—but there must not be a next time. Peter had set his feet on the mountain Maru and, if he did not climb it, the earth would fall. and she and Gerry with it. . . .

Tonight, because the expedition would be with them tomorrow, she had had the long candles lighted in the dining-room, and put on her best evening dress and told the bearer to serve champagne. It was a hot night, but what else should it be in the middle of May in Rudwal, where her husband worked and where she had made a home?

Across from her, Peter looked almost relaxed, sitting a little back in his chair, the candle lights rippling with the irregular breeze from the punkah, moving in waves across his white dinner jacket and black cummerbund, glowing in points of dull gold down his shirt and at his cuffs.

"*Huzoor sahib!*" It was the office chuprasi.

Peter jumped to his feet. "What?"

"*Sahib log a-gye.*"

Peter said: "What *sahib log*? At this time of night? *Kitne?*"

"*Panchh, huzoor.*"

"Five!"

"Lord Wilcot, sahib."

Emily said: "I know what's happened. It's the expedition. They caught the Mail from Lahore."

Then she heard Gerry's voice from the front steps—"Aren't you going to let us in? Where are you?"—and his familiar footsteps running along the passage. He burst in with arms outstretched, crying: "Peter! It's good to see you again. We're on our way to the *dâk* bungalow, but we had to drop in to tell you we're here. Emily!"

"Hallo, Walsh," Peter was saying. "And you must be Lyon? I'm Savage."

Harry Walsh introduced the two big, quiet men in the background, one blue-eyed and blond, one dark and short. "Fernand Lapeyrol—and I think you met Oliver Cadez in Chamonix?"

"Yes. *Tout va bien?*"

"*Fait chaud, monsieur. Enchanté, madame.*"

The time of peace was past now, and only the mountain mattered. Gerry kissed Emily's cheek. Peter was telling the bearer to bring the decanters and the soda bottles off the ice in the godown. The two guides stood nervously, rolling their tweed caps in their hands, sweating like bulls in their heavy wool suits. The whisky gurgled out; bottles and glasses clinked—Maru! The summit! Victory! Conquest!

"Let's have a look at the map," Peter said.

Harry Walsh said: "It's pretty late, isn't it? Besides, we've been studying it on the ship, you know."

"Ah, that's the Survey of India map," Peter said. "This is my working map, an enlargement I had made, and have been filling in with information from all sources since nineteen-seven. I'll go and get it."

"Really, I think——" Harry began.

"You must eat here—except probably Lapeyrol and Cadez would be happier in the *dâk* bungalow. They can take the kit over. The chuprasi will show them the way and see that they get a decent meal."

Harry Walsh did not look happy, for it was past midnight, but such irruptions were not uncommon in India, and everyone was prepared for them.

"It's quite all right," Emily said.

Harry said doubtfully: "Are you sure?"

"Quite," she said, smiling. Peter had gone to get the map, and Gerry must have gone with him. The two guides had left, with undisguised relief. The young man Lyon was tall and rawboned and as dourly Scottish-looking as his name.

Harry Walsh was on his guard. At thirty-five he was acknowledged to be the soundest and wisest as well as the most technically expert English climber of the day—and he was also Peggy's husband.

"Quite all right," Emily repeated as she went out to speak to the *khansamah*. She prayed that it would be. . . .

A few minutes after eleven o'clock at night the wind changed its note. Some stars were dimly visible to the north. It was cold—howling, freezing cold—but nothing like the unspeakable cold of the first day of the blizzard. The weather was against them—as it had been all the way, since the torrential rain of the day they left Rudwal.

When Peter went back inside the tent, Harry Walsh looked up quietly and asked him: "What's it like?"

"Better," he said. "The wind's veering and there are some stars. We can push on tomorrow."

There were only the two of them in the tiny tent. Gerry and Lapeyrol were in another, pitched ten feet away, and the porters in two slightly larger ones close to Gerry's.

It was going to be bad tomorrow. Peter knew that. But only a fool would expect to conquer Maru, 27,141 feet—nearly four thousand feet higher than anything yet climbed—without running into bad conditions and hard days. He went to sleep.

In the morning he aroused everyone before dawn so that they would be ready to move on as soon as the sun came up. It was a brilliant day, the sun shining clear and pure on the new snow.

The camp they were now at was Camp 1, at 19,700 feet. This was as high as he and Gerry had gone on their reconnaissance in 1911.

About four thousand feet farther up, say at 23,600, the ridge, which looked easy enough up to there, was blocked by a rank of huge rock needles. There were four large ones, two small and, at the back, one particularly thin and spirelike, which Peter had named Cleopatra's Needle. Once they had got over them, or round them, they would be at about 24,600 feet.

It had been obvious that they must establish a camp, Camp 2, at the foot of the Needles, and by now this should have been done. The blizzard had deranged that plan, because during it they had eaten most of the supplies that should have been used to stock Camp 2. So now they would have to start again—the porters going down to the base camp and back again.

However, the two days that would take need not be completely wasted. Today four climbers could get to the Needles, make a preliminary examination, and return here to Camp 1. Tomorrow they could do the same, but would not have to return, as by that afternoon Camp 2 should have been set up.

He had decided to take Lapeyrol, Gerry and Harry Walsh with him, leaving Lyon and Cadez in charge of the movement of the tents and stores. It was time to go. He formed the climbing party into two cordées of two each, Lapeyrol and himself as the Number Ones, and set off.

They climbed steadily. The summit cone of the mountain, which had been clearly visible from Camp 1, slowly sank behind the glacier snow above the Needles as they climbed, so that Cleopatra's now seemed to be the final peak.

Getting to that summit, even to the glacier snow, would be very hard. On the left a snow slope curved away from the Needles like the inside of a cup, very steep at the top, moderating farther down as it ran into the South Glacier; but the glacier was a vertical mile down. This tremendous bowl they had named just that—the Bowl.

To the right of the Needles the mountain fell into the huge trench leading on down to the Great Chimney Glacier. The Great Chimney, a nearly continuous series of cracks, channels and faults, led up from the glacier to about 23,600 feet. If only it had continued another thousand feet it might have presented a possible route to the upper snow glacier. But it didn't. It ended below the face of a vertical black cliff, five hundred feet high, half a mile wide, and so smooth that it had been named the Mirror Wall. This strange formation was flanked on the left by the Needles, and on the right by slopes of rock and ice, swept by avalanches and ice falls.

So, although the south-east ridge was not altogether easy even without the Needles, it was nevertheless the least difficult of all the approaches to the summit.

They did the 3,900 feet to the base of Needle One in just under five hours, starting fast and going noticeably slower as the altitude affected them. All the same, good enough. 11.20 a.m. The Bowl stretched away to the left, the Mirror Wall to the right.

Eleven twenty, and dark at seven. And it would take three hours to get down the ridge. They should start back from here not later than four. Say four hours of exploration. Peter decided he would take Gerry and look at the Bowl. Harry and Lapeyrol could go to the Mirror Wall. The Needles themselves were obviously a last resort, to be examined in detail only if no way could be found round them.

They re-roped. Gerry waved his axe and shouted at Harry: "Bet you your sugar ration that *we* find a way."

"Nothing doing," Harry answered briefly. He had been a good second-in-command, and there had not been as many differences of judgment as Peter had expected.

He moved off with Gerry. The slope began to steepen as the ridge merged into the Bowl. Soon he saw that in less than a quarter of a mile, if they worked on diagonally up and round the inside of the Bowl, it would be all but vertical.

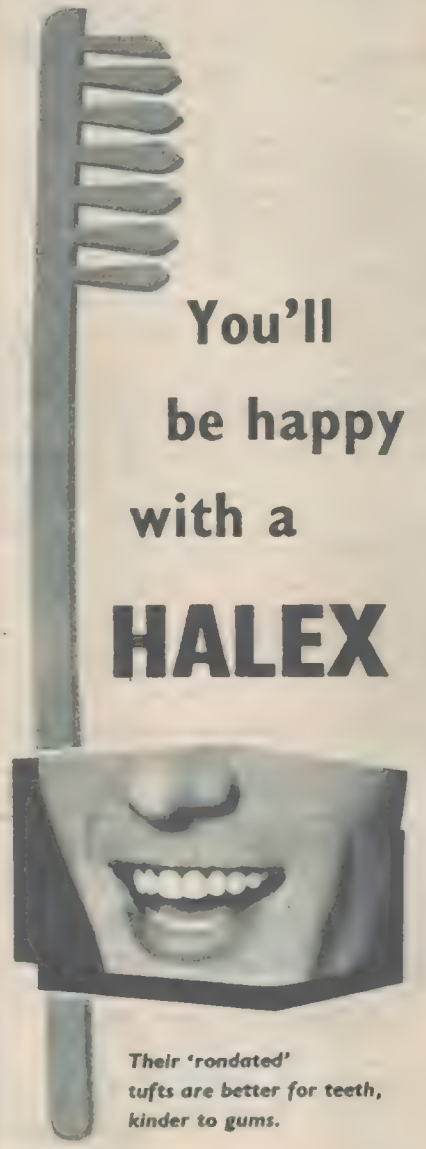
He decided to go straight up the slope from where they then were, instead of continuing the traverse. This route would take them towards the foot of Cleopatra's Needle.

At first the snow was still firm; but

Dusk

by DOUGLAS GIBSON

Now ends the fevered industry of day;
From offices and shops the slow tide streams
Into the stations and is whirled away
Towards the suburbs and their lazy dreams.
Blue mist enfolds the citadels and spires
And soothes the wounds of day with gentle fingers,
And wakes the waiting heart with new desires
Where always at this hour some lover lingers,
Watching the festooned lamps spring into flower
And aching for the moment when quick feet
Signal the ending of the daytime's power,
Lost in that magic moment when they meet.



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later, as the slope steepened, it seemed to change almost imperceptibly to ice. Step-cutting became a slow, dangerous business. . . . And now the wind was rising.

Peter turned to Gerry, who had been covering well, and motioned to him to head back down to the ridge. Gerry kept staring up past him at the steepening slope. Peter looked up and saw wraiths of snow devils dancing along the skyline. Gerry's goggles shone in the glistening glare-back from the snow so that Peter could not see his eyes.

"Let's go on up," Gerry bawled finally. "Up—to the top."

Peter's immediate thought was that Gerry had lost his judgment—through some effect of the altitude, probably, for he had been going very strongly. He motioned sharply down with his axe, and after a time Gerry slowly turned and led on down.

The next was a tense half-hour for him, since he was looking straight down into the South Glacier a mile below, and he did not know how badly Gerry's normal habits had been upset. He kept the rope tighter than he would normally have done, but still Gerry went much too carelessly, and it was only a question of time before he would miss a step and go down into the Bowl, probably jerking Peter with him.

Then he had an idea. He made Gerry understand, by yelling into the wind until the roof of his mouth froze, that he was feeling groggy. Gerry stopped and seemed to collect himself, and went on down beautifully from that moment, treating him as a novice who'd suddenly got vertigo.

At the bottom, when they were again standing on the ridge, Gerry said: "I felt damned queer up there. Didn't want to stop. Couldn't see any reason to. You're all right really, aren't you?"

He nodded wearily.

They went on down the ridge to Camp 1. Harry and Lapeyrol were already back. They'd got cocoa and hot jam ready, mixed into a delicious stew.

Hunched round the lantern, Peter told them first what he and Gerry had done and seen. Then he asked: "What about your side?"

"The Mirror Wall is impossible—unthinkable," Harry told them at once.

"Between the Needles and the Mirror Wall proper there is a kind of fault, but that won't go either. There's a section near the top where all hand and footholds simply vanish. The side walls spread back to twelve feet—too far for chimneying, and the fault itself actually overhangs. I mean the whole cliff leans out, and the fault in it, for fifty feet."

Peter decided at once that he must see for himself whether the Fault was impossible. He said: "Cadez and I will try it tomorrow. Harry—I want you and Gerry to have a go at the Needles."

There was silence for a moment. Cadez looked at him.

Harry said: "The Fault's impossible, Peter. Do you think Lapeyrol and I didn't try?"

"No," he said, "but I must see for myself."

"Just see?" Harry said. "You're not just going to 'see.' You're going to go all out to *make* it go, and I tell you it won't. Didn't you hear me tell you—it widens, it's too wide for chimneying. When the sun's up, though the Fault's always in shadow, stones and pieces of rock begin to fall down it. Twice small avalanches swept it from top to bottom, and we only managed to hang on because we were in good places each time—places that had three-inch footholds, I mean."

He stopped, panting. After a while he said: "It's murder to take anyone up the Fault, now that we've told you what's it's like. It's suicide to go alone."

Gerry suddenly blazed out. "Good God, Harry," he cried, "are we climbing Maru or going on a picnic up Monte Rosa?"

Peter said to Cadez: "Do you want

to come with me tomorrow, or would you prefer to go with Mr. Walsh?"

Cadez was much the same build as Harry, strong and square, but darker. His brown eyes glittered, and he said: "I will come with you, *mon général*. Doubtless you will make provisions for my children in the usual way." Then he crawled out of the tent, quaking with fury.

Peter caught Gerry's eye, and Gerry shrugged. . . .

Peter did not go to sleep. In an unlabelled sack among the pile outside there were a hundred very large flat-sided nails, or steel pegs. He lay thinking about them. They were about six inches long. Some of the German climbers had been using them for a year or so. You drove them into the rock with a special small hammer you carried with you when you were expecting to use them.

The English gentlemen-climbers would have nothing to do with them. But they wore special boots, didn't they? It was no use talking logic to people like that. He had been sure that neither Walsh nor Lyon, nor any other British mountaineer, would come with the expedition if he had known that pegs would be used.

So in the morning he waited, delaying his preparations, until Harry and Gerry had set off. Then he turned to Cadez and said: "We are going to take pegs. And the camera, to prove to the world that there was need for pegs."

Cadez was a guide, a professional, and he had no particular love for English gentlemanliness as such. He made his living by climbing mountains, and he also liked to do it. The sight of the bright steel pegs and the two hammers in the sack did not shock him as much as it would have shocked Harry or Gerry.

The Fault gave them all that Harry and Lapeyrol had promised, and more. Cadez led most of the time, working like a madman, taking risks he would never have countenanced in the Alps. The sun shone eerily through the cornice of snow that vaulted out over the top of the fault, and every now and then stones and spears of ice bombarded them.

With the help of the pegs, they surmounted the overhanging fifty feet which had stopped Harry and Lapeyrol. But above the overhang the Fault narrowed again until it was less than half an inch wide—no room for Cadez's gloved fingers, and he could not take off the gloves without getting frostbite.

Peter took the lead. To the right the Mirror Wall glittered evilly. To the left was an ice wall, then the Needles. Standing on a peg, six thousand feet above the Great Chimney Glacier, the wind shrieking at him and the light failing as the sun sank behind the mountain, he took a last look upward, searching with a sudden enormous anger for some smallest break in the rock where he could hammer in another peg. There was none.

"Are you sure it won't go?" Cadez whispered venomously.

Peter ground his teeth together and looked up again.

Cadez said: "Now would you like me to take a picture?"

The Fault would not go, not by any means. Not only was there no hold for a peg within close reach, there was none within twenty-five feet. He pointed down, and slowly they began the descent, at his insistence hammering out and taking back with them all the pegs they had so carefully, so breathtakingly, hammered in. He would be using them again.

At the conference that evening Harry said briefly that he and Gerry had surmounted the first four Needles—three large and one small—so that now only one large and Cleopatra's remained; but it was not feasible to continue on that route. The difficulties already overcome were of such severity that the slightest change in the weather, when climbers were already on the Needles, would bring disaster on them.

Peter waited for the effect to sink in, and then pulled a peg from the place in the corner of the tent where he had hidden it and said: "We got over the overhang. With these."

There was a silence. Peter could have gone straight on to tell them that, in spite of the pegs, Walsh's Fault wouldn't go. But it was necessary to bring this particular matter to a head first.

So he now held the battered peg in his hand and said: "I take it you don't disapprove, then?"

After a time Walsh said: "They must be very useful. Wouldn't it have been a good idea to tell us that you intended to bring some?"

He said: "Would you have come?"

Walsh said: "No."

"Why not?"

Walsh shrugged. "If you don't know, I can't explain. You got over the overhang? With them?"

Peter nodded. He said: "It would have been impossible without them. Wouldn't it, Cadez?"

Cadez nodded.

Peter said: "Will you agree to use them now?"

He kept his eyes remorselessly on Walsh's. Walsh was in a turmoil, or as much as anyone could be when his reactions and thoughts were as sluggish as they are after a day or two at such a height.

He said slowly: "I think—on Maru—perhaps, if there is no other way to get down."

"To get up, too? If there's no other way to get to the top?" Peter said with brutal insistence. "Even to make a dangerous but possible pitch less dangerous?"

At last Walsh nodded. Peter turned his head. Walsh was broken. There had been no need to use the other arguments, and there were many. Maru spoke for itself.

He began to tell them about his day with Cadez on the Fault. When he had finished he said carefully: "Tomorrow I would like Cadez and Gerry to finish the Needles, if Cadez thinks he can be of use, while Harry and I rest here for an attempt on the summit the day after."

FREEDOM—2

I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.

Voltaire

THE next day passed slowly for Peter. He had nothing to say to Harry Walsh, and Harry had nothing to say to him. There had been a definite break between them, no less definite for being unspoken. Harry would obey him as the leader of this expedition, until they got back to Rudwal; but he would never climb with him again. It was a pity, even though he had expected it. Only Gerry could be trusted, because only Gerry trusted him.

He knew that, if it had not been for Gerry, Harry would not have accepted the invitation to join the expedition in the first place; much as he must have wanted to take part in the climbing of Maru. He had been hostile right from the beginning, and there was more than just the different views they had on mountaineering to explain it.

No. The thing to remember was that this was Peggy's husband. Peggy must be full of bitterness—a depth of it far greater than Peter would have thought it possible for her to contain. And she had been pouring that bitterness into Harry's ear for three years now.

Two o'clock. Three o'clock. Four o'clock. No sign of Gerry and Cadez. They scrambled out of the tent, stood in the wind, beat their hands and arms. Back into the tent. Half-past five. The light was beginning to fade. Heavy clouds overhead. They went out again.

At six o'clock Harry said: "There they are."

Peter scanned Needle One and with difficulty made out a figure near the top, coming down slowly—very slowly, because he was alone. Harry saw at the same time that there was only one climber. They grabbed ropes and ice axes and hurried up the ridge.

It was Gerry whose arms they grasped as he swung down off the lowest rocks of Needle One. "Cadez is dead," he said at once. One end of the rope coiled round his waist was broken.

"Later," Peter said, for Gerry had stopped and was looking miserably at him. "Come on down."

Then Gerry went with them, and they hurried to the tent. By then it was full dark. They lit the Primus and melted snow and rubbed Gerry's face with snow, and he began to speak. They were jammed together like sardines.

"I led as far as we'd gone yesterday. Three hours. Cadez took over. Peter, it was hard. Inch by inch, searching, hammering in pegs, stretching the rope, moving on. The weather changed—we got sudden blasts of wind that shook the mountain, Peter.

"Cadez led on. Fifteen minutes in one place—one hold, I mean. Rock broke. I fell, Cadez held me. We got over Cleopatra's Needle. It's all done, Peter."

Peter patted his shoulder. Gerry

CRUNCHIE
makes exciting biting!

4D

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was calming down and spoke more rationally now.

"On the way back, with Cadez as Number Two, he fell. Wind blew him off. Or he was using a peg—stepping down on to it. He wasn't used to them. Or he was trying not to use them, he didn't trust them. I don't know—I had a good belay, good anchor.

"But it was on Needle Three—you know, Harry, the place where there's a run out of nearly forty feet. No belay will hold the leader going up, or the Number Two coming down, if he falls there.

"The anchor held. The rope broke. He disappeared into the Bowl. I saw him for about two hundred, three hundred feet, arms and legs out, stiff, flat, like a black cross, whirling. I'm sorry, Peter."

Peter gave Gerry ten aspirins and lay quiet, patting his hands. It was bitterly, furiously cold. What fantastic power of fear or remorse had got Gerry down the Needles alone after the accident? What he himself and Cadez had done on the Fault was nothing compared to that.

After a long time, when Gerry sounded as though he were asleep, Harry Walsh said: "And tomorrow?"

Peter said: "Are you going to come with me?"

Walsh said: "No. And Gerry obviously can't. So we'll go down. We ought to look for Cadez's body—though it's hopeless. All you have to say is that it was your decision to turn down. I'll back you to the hilt, here and at home."

Peter said, "Good night," and left the tent.

SLEEP was a long time coming that night. Peter knew that Gerry would expect to come with him as soon as he learned that Harry would not. This was the mountain, this the effort, towards which they had been pointing their mountaineering selves for the past six years.

Very well then. They would go up to the summit. Gerry and he. Who else? Nothing would stop them. Harry and Lyon and Lapeyrol would stir the climbing world against him and their tale would react in other quarters as well. And if they failed, Gerry and he, then it would be worse.

He kept thinking of Emily. He wanted to explain to her why he must go on, but she was not there with him. She was asleep in their big bed in the big bungalow, tranquil and strong. Would she understand if he came back tomorrow, and not Gerry?

Whatever happened, *that* must not. If anyone was to come back alone tomorrow, it must be Gerry. He could not face Emily if it were not, because she loved Gerry. Not as she loved him, not in any way that could make a man jealous; hardly even as a brother or a son. She loved him for the same causes that he, Peter, did—as an ideal, a personification of decency and unselfishness.

Peter could pursue his thoughts no further, though he tried. He could only fall asleep.

He awoke at five o'clock and aroused Gerry. "Wake up, old man. We're going to the top."

Harry Walsh sat up, fully awake on the instant, and said fiercely: "You're coming down with me, Gerry. I told him last night I wouldn't go with him."

Gerry was not fully awake, though he was already half in one boot. "Eh?" he mumbled. "Are we going down?"

"Yes," Harry said. "If you refuse, he can't go by himself. You'll save his life, Gerry."

Gerry seemed to grasp what was happening. "Are we going up, Peter, you and I?" he asked simply.

Peter said: "Yes."

Gerry nodded and kept working at his boots. Harry turned on Peter. "You can't take Gerry. By God, Savage, you're the biggest swine I've ever met." He mouthed almost incoherent words of loathing. Then he said: "I thought even you must see that Gerry's not fit to climb."

To be continued next week

STRANGE TALES OF THE SEA • 9

by Commander Douglas Duff

The Black Stream of death

THROUGH all the ages, derelicts have drifted helplessly across the northern Pacific, caught in Kuro Shiwo, the Black Ocean Stream of death. During the three hundred years since white men first reached the western coasts of America, nearly a hundred vessels from the Orient have been found with only dead sailors to man them. As recently as February, 1955, one was boarded north of San Francisco with eight skeletons as all that was left of her company.

In the summer of 1927, the American liner Margaret Dollar, steaming north off Cape Flattery in Washington State, sighted a strange vessel on her starboard bow and, because it seemed deserted, closed in and sent a party aboard her.

She was the hundred-ton Japanese fishing-boat Ryo-Yei-Maru, which had sailed from Misaki six months before, a new vessel. Aboard her were eleven skeletons—nothing else! Her camshaft was broken. Her engines had died on her. Kuro Shiwo had claimed another victim, proving that it remains as deadly to modern powered ships as to the sailing vessels of the past.

Like the Gulf Stream, Kuro Shiwo is a river in the ocean. It flows from Japan eastwards across the Pacific until it merges with the West Wind Drift in position 43 degrees north latitude and 160 degrees east longitude. Thence it swings south along the western shores of North America until it heads back towards Japan in a fatal circle.

Its dark waters, cloaked in drifting weed, flow at an average of nine and a half miles daily—the speed varies between three and thirty-one miles. Japanese fishermen caught in its fatal grip are carried through the loneliest seas in the world with small hope of rescue. Few are picked up, and those who are not saved drift until their ships founder or fall to pieces beneath their bones.

Some have floated in the stream for years, and some have made the fantastic round-trip more than once.

A few have survived. On one vessel, only one man of the crew was alive when it drifted ashore near Acapulco in Mexico. From another ship, three men out of a crew of thirty-five lived through fourteen months as lonely castaways, before they were rescued off Cape Flattery.

These men are dangerous

Continued from page 19

grass, inches above our heads, and hit a tree.

The convoy failed to arrive—it was switched to another road—and we withdrew, thankfully.

Our jeeps carried mines, grenades and home-made bombs, but to our regret we were unable to use them against railways. After months of training in sabotage, it would have been satisfying to have wrecked a signal box, or blown up a bridge or viaduct. Unluckily for us, Maquis in our area had already done so much to the railways that the Germans had ceased running them.

S.A.S. forces to the north had wider scope in this respect. Captain Ian Fenwick's party, who were parachuted about seventy miles from the coast shortly after the invasion, blew up three main lines in twelve days. They time-bombed an engine shed, derailed and set fire to trains.

Sergeant Du Vivier, farther south, was out on patrol when he heard a distant explosion. A villager reported: "The Maquis have blown up the line. They are delaying a munitions train going to Cosne."

Du Vivier was delighted. "Now's our chance to destroy the train."

He got word to Frenchmen who were being made to repair the line, and work was slowed down while he and two men cycled in the direction of Cosne. Wearing battledress, and each carrying thirty pounds of explosive, they calmly rode through two German-occupied towns and reached an open stretch of the line.

For a couple of hours, alert all the time for German patrols which might surprise them, they scraped at the ballast with their fighting-knives and bare hands, burying the three lots of explosive fifty feet apart.

They reached camp, dishevelled and exhausted, to learn that the Maquis had already reported the outcome of their work—two engines and a forty-foot wagon loaded with anti-aircraft guns absolutely wrecked, ten other wagons derailed.

Units elsewhere helped to cripple German organization behind the lines by attacking petrol dumps, demolishing pylons and fusing telephone systems.

Lieutenant Alec Muirhead, who had joined the S.A.S. with me while it was in Egypt, was faced with an unusual problem at Autun. Germans there were running a synthetic petrol plant. It was well guarded, with a high fence and exceptionally strong anti-aircraft cover. How, then, to destroy it?

At 1.30 a.m., in bright moonlight, he and his men crept into a fold in the ground just outside the plant. They were so near that they could hear the sentries talking.

Three-inch mortars were quietly set up to lob their bombs over the fence.

Alec raised his hand. "Fire!"

The first mortar-bombs sailed neatly over and burst on the target.

"More bombs. As fast as you can."

In all, forty high-explosive and incendiary bombs were loosed off. The Germans thought it was an air-raid and ran to their shelters. The storage tanks were soon fully ablaze, the roar of the flames nearly drowning the wail of the siren. A reconnaissance party found them still burning three days later.

Rain, high winds and cold nights in the late summer of 1944 added to the discomforts of groups such as mine, living in a forest. Mostly, though, we were too busy to think of ourselves. During a spell of less severe weather, when supplies were parachuted to us every night, I did not have a chance to sleep for nine days.

Clouds over the hills made it hard for the R.A.F. to spot dropping zones. At Dun les Places, a battle between Germans and the Maquis left vehicles ablaze on a bridge. Shortly afterwards, a delivery pilot mistook them for signal flares and, while Tony Marsh, my squadron commander, watched, appalled, hundreds of gallons of petrol and badly needed tyres were carefully dumped into the flames.

Woods increased the hazards for men who were dropped. The S.A.S. padre, Fraser McLusky, drifted wide of his dropping zone and was hung up in a tree. He took out a knife, cut the rigging lines of his parachute and fell twenty feet, spraining an ankle. Major Bill Frazer was also caught in a tree, but the night was so black that he could not see the ground.

For two hours he swung in the breeze. Then, with the first flush of dawn, he looked below—to find his toes a few inches above the grass.

Captain Pat Garstin and his party were dropped at La Ferte Alais, and everything seemed to be going smoothly. But, unknown to them, Germans had surrounded the DZ. Nine men, Pat included, were captured. They were rushed to Gestapo headquarters in Paris for interrogation.

"How many are you?"

Pat remained silent.

"Why were you dropped?"

Silence.

"Are you not the advance party of a big airborne landing?"

Again, Pat refused to talk. The Germans were convinced—quite wrongly—that a landing had been planned for the area, but neither he nor his companions, even under torture, gave any information.

They were imprisoned in a converted hotel when a guard handed them civilian clothes. "Wear these instead of your uniforms," he said. "You are to be exchanged for German agents held in London. It is necessary to pass through neutral territory."

At 1 a.m. the nine got into a lorry and were taken north. At dawn they stopped at a wood near Beauvais.

"Out!"

As they walked up a path to a clearing they realized that the civilian clothes were simply to dress them like spies. Corporal Vaculik asked if they were going to be executed. Their escort, a sergeant, nodded.

Pat whispered to his men. They were lined up. Facing them were two Gestapo officers with sub-machine pistols.

A man in a raincoat told them: "For having endangered the security of the German Army, you are condemned to the penalty of death and will be shot."

At the word "shot," the prisoners dashed for the trees. The executioners fired immediately. In the confusion, Vaculik ran clear. Garstin and six others were killed. Corporal Jones tripped headlong, and the Germans passed him, taking him for dead.

Vaculik and Jones managed to give their pursuers the slip and met again ten days later. Helped by the Maquis, they returned to Britain. . . .

A CONTINUAL task in our camp was unpacking the white-painted, eight-foot-long cylinders which came in every drop. They opened into halves, lengthwise. Inside were arms, ammunition, food, cigarettes and mail. Our families had no idea what we were doing, but a fortnight after we left England they had been notified that we had "crossed the Channel."

We got into touch with headquarters at Moor Park, Hertfordshire, twice daily. Outward-going messages were transmitted at 7 a.m.; replies followed in the afternoon. The opening bars of "Sur le Pont d'Avignon" blared from the radio, rising and falling with each swing of the aerial, hung from a nearby branch. Then our code name. "Hallo, Sabu 66. . . . Hallo, Sabu. . . ."

Orders were coded in groups of letters which foxed the Germans to the end of the war. Personal news—the births of children, awards or decorations—was in ordinary speech.

The only member who did not go

on regular patrol was Corporal Danger, our signaller from the Phantom Corps. He remained in camp, in a tent improvised by stretching a parachute between bushes. He had to be prepared, if necessary, to radio Moor Park at any moment of the day or night on the frequency reserved for emergencies.

The threat of attack never allowed us to relax. Life had to be organized on the basis that we might have to leave at once, fighting. No more than one machine-gun was dismantled and cleaned at a time; no more than one jeep was out of action for maintenance.

Ironically, as soon as we left the forest we were in peril from Allied aircraft. A day or two after landing behind the lines, I glanced up at a Spitfire and said with relief: "One of ours." But since we were in enemy territory, and anything on the roads was fair game, it turned and swooped with a torrent of bullets. We dived into a ditch.

The S.A.S. were not the only ones to suffer in this respect. Two pantechnicons which Germans had used for moving stores were captured by Resistance men of the neighbouring district of St. Aubin and St. Vrai.

They painted a large white Croix de Lorraine on the roof of each vehicle and drove their prizes in triumph to the nearest village. Before they could unload them, however, two sharp-eyed American pilots saw the pantechnicons and, ignoring the crosses, strafed them with devastating success. One Resistance man was wounded.

The French were so incensed that the incident threatened to become a first-class row. I asked Moor Park for a suitably abject apology to be sent to the Resistance groups concerned.

OUR policy towards civilians was to avoid them as much as possible—partly for fear of betrayal and partly so as not to expose them to reprisals. If, however, we had no choice but to involve them in ambushes, they supported our efforts bravely.

At dawn one morning, Lieutenant Stewart Richardson's patrol, which had been tipped by the Maquis to watch a certain road, found that the only place for an ambush was facing a cottage. They were parking their jeeps when a woman came out of the cottage with a roast chicken. "This is for your breakfast," she said.

"We might accidentally set fire to your home," Stewart warned her. "And if the Germans learn about this chicken, you will be shot for collaborating."

She smiled. "I'm aware of that." She tied her scarf tighter round her head and cycled off to hide in the woods with her husband, who was serving with the Maquis.

The sun climbed higher, the morning grew hotter, and still there was no sign of the enemy. Then events took an unexpected turn. The patrol was about to leave when, to its surprise, along the road trudged a German soldier. He was so footsore and tired that he slumped on the grass a hundred yards from the S.A.S. guns and promptly fell asleep. His fright on being awakened by dreaded British "terrorists" utterly possessed him.

Stewart's difficulty, as McDiarmid's had been upon capturing the German cyclists near Toucy, was of deciding on the next move.

A Frenchman in the patrol whose parents had been murdered by Germans produced a revolver, saying: "I'll fix him." Stewart jumped forward and pulled at the Frenchman's wrist.

"Don't. We'll take him back to camp."

Strangely enough, Karl, as we called him, became a valuable member of our team. He had been a blacksmith in civilian life, and we put him to work on our gun mountings. It was much more to his taste than soldiering. He hammered with tireless enthusiasm.

The question of a guard was easily solved. "You will come to no harm with us," I said, "but if you step outside the camp, the Resistance will catch you." That did the trick. He was a model prisoner and stayed ever grateful to Stewart.

Among my most vivid memories of

the forest is the Maquis, in battledress tops and blue denims, marching off on patrol at sunrise. Each had a rifle in one hand and a long French loaf in the other. They were an astonishingly resilient breed.

An elderly Maquis guide was in Lieutenant Watson's patrol when it drove through a small market town, and passed a German convoy which was drawn up in the market place. It seemed to be guarded by only five men, who gave no indication that they had recognized the jeeps.

"That target's too good to miss," said Watson. "We'll turn back."

He raced into the market place a second time—and found, too late, that the Germans had noticed them. Machine-guns mounted on the trucks returned the patrol's shots. The guide was wounded and toppled out into the road. He dragged himself into the garden of a house and hid while Germans hunted for him. Two days afterwards he walked into Watson's camp for further duty.

Maquis discipline, as I saw it in Chevrier's camp, was fantastic. When

FREEDOM—3

There is no freedom on earth for those who deny freedom to others.

Elbert Hubbard

a man snatched some cigarettes from a container the minute it had dropped on a DZ, his leader gave him an open-handed slap across the face. Next day, when cigarettes were distributed, the offender had to forfeit his share. In a more extreme case, a man who helped himself to extra rations was court-martialled and executed.

In defiance of the enemy around them, the Maquis ran their camp on orthodox military lines and even held church parades and sick parades. Their hospitals — usually isolated houses—were open to our soldiers, but when John Tonkin's party clashed with Germans, and a man was badly wounded, there was not one in the area.

"The only thing to do," said John, "is to take him to Poitiers."

Poitiers was then a German garrison town. The streets were full of troops. Yet John's jeep, mounted with British guns, and with a crew in British uniform, was driven to the civilian hospital without challenge.

The S.A.S. men carried their colleague inside. John buttonholed a doctor. "Please admit this 'Frenchman'—an urgent case."

While the incredulous staff quickly changed the wounded man's uniform for pyjamas and entered him on their records as French, the rest of the crew returned to camp.

Casualties who fell into enemy hands fared according to the whims of their captors. Corporal Duffy was in Ian Fenwick's patrol when they were seen by a German spotter aircraft. The pilot radioed Chambon, the village for which they were heading, and an ambush was laid.

A woman who heard of these preparations stopped the jeep and urged: "Turn back."

Ian, roused by reports that many of his friends had been wiped out, replied: "Thanks for the warning, but I intend to fight."

They ran into the ambush with all guns blazing. Ian was hit in the head by a cannon shell and died instantly. The jeep careered off the road, out of control, and crashed. Two other members of the crew were killed.

When Duffy regained consciousness he was sent to a hospital near Fontainebleau. In his ward were eight Germans and a Russian.

The hospital had French girl cleaners. One of them, busying round his bed, said quietly: "Want to escape?"

"Of course."

"We will help you."

A fortnight later she put a covered bucket on the floor beside him. "Look inside."

She and her companions fussed round the other patients to distract their attention, and Duffy pulled out a German medical officer's uniform. He hid it under his bedclothes. While the rest of the ward slept, he examined it more closely. No shoes!

He went to the door and signalled to one of the girls. Shoes were delivered by the same bucket, and because the ward was awake again, another diversion was needed for him to get them under the bedclothes.

That night he lay waiting for the measured breathing which would tell him that the others were asleep. When he judged that the moment was right, he put on the uniform and crept out into the corridor. Then, with all the confidence he could command—and with considerable difficulty, since the shoes were far too small—he strode through into the hospital courtyard.

As he reached the gate, the sentry saluted. Duffy returned the salute.

Clear of the hospital, he began walking towards Milly, in the direction of advancing American forces. He left the road, took to the woods and decided to throw the shoes away. He stumbled through the undergrowth and was almost exhausted when he chanced on a hut in a clearing.

He watched it for a while, but saw nobody. Cautiously, he made his way to the door and pushed it open. The hut was empty. He lay down and slept.

Distant firing woke him at daybreak and he set off towards it in his bare feet, the socks having worn out. The going was somewhat easier when he struck the road again south of Milly.

He met an elderly Frenchman leading a horse and cart. Duffy managed to convince him that, despite the enemy uniform, he was an escaped British prisoner. The Frenchman beamed. "Climb aboard."

Unfortunately, they had not gone far when two German soldiers drew up on motor-cycles. In despair, Duffy realized that even if he had the strength to make a bid for freedom, he would not get far.

But the Germans were pointing down the road. It dawned on him that they were merely asking the way. He did not know where they meant, but he pointed in vague agreement. The Germans sped off.

The Frenchman introduced him to the local Resistance, who took him to a house where his blistered feet were bandaged by a doctor. Later, he was passed to the Americans, and in Milly hospital they awarded him the Order of the Purple Heart. . . .

One afternoon, the son of the mayor of Villiers St. Benoit, a town on the fringe of our forest, ran to our camp with a message from the Maquis. "German traffic," he said, "is heavy on the road between Courtenay and Sens. Can you send jeeps to attack?"

I looked at the map. The road was twenty miles to the north. "We will go," I said.

I decided to take Stewart's jeep with me. We made sure the tanks were full and spent the rest of the day checking our vehicles. We could not afford breakdowns. Also we cleaned and loaded our guns.

We left at eight the next morning. Our route was to be over the hills towards Aillant. I wanted to by-pass Aillant if we could. The surrounding countryside was flat and dangerously open. We would be too good a target.

My map showed a track through woods east of the town, and we took it, bumping and lurching through a tunnel of trees. Then the track petered out. The map was inaccurate. We turned and retraced our path. We had no alternative; Aillant it would have to be.

WE approached the town warily, the safety catches of our guns off, and our fingers on the triggers. The first cluster of cottages was reached without incident. I called to Stewart. "Let's ask if Germans are about."

We walked to a cottage. Nobody was at the front, so we went round the back—straight into the arms of a girl, who gasped in astonishment. With admirable presence of mind, she at once summed up the inadequacy of our French and led us to a schoolhouse. There she banged on the door with such vigour and impatience that we felt every German in France would hear.

Eventually the door was opened by the schoolmistress, who spoke English. "The Germans have left," she said. "They are massing at Joigny, eight miles north."

In spite of this assurance that the town was unoccupied, we thought it wise to drive through the streets in keen apprehension, every nerve alert. Passers-by gazed at us, at our jeeps, our guns and our Union Jacks. Everything was quiet and strangely still in the warm, midday sun.

Out on the opposite side of Aillant we made good progress, but the road was bordered by large fields. Trees were few and widely scattered.

As we came to a rise I saw a signpost—JOIGNY 4 KM. We were closer to Joigny than I had thought; too close to be healthy.

On our left was a small track. "Down there," I said.

The jeeps turned. We hurtled along the track at full speed. Thick columns of dust swirled up behind us. There was no cover. We were overlooked by two hills which the Germans would undoubtedly be using as observation posts.

It was when I studied my map, unable to find the track on it, that I knew we were completely lost.

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